THE OLDEST SURVIVING LITERARY AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE FOR CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD VISUAL ARTS.

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Paul Corby Finney
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paul Corby Finney

- Summary -

Until recently the historical study of early Christian attitudes toward visual arts and image making has been dominated by confessional bias. The issues have not been clearly stated and the conclusions reached by individual investigators have been distorted to fit the needs of apology.

The present study is concerned only with the oldest surviving sources relative to the subject; this means in effect sources which date to the period prior to the mid-third century. There are two kinds of sources which are relevant to the subject, namely the written remains of the early church and, secondly, its figured material remains. In the past those who have judged that Christianity was originally and normatively aniconic have verified their theory with evidences adduced largely from written sources. Conversely, the upholders of the iconophilic interpretation have based their arguments largely on the prima facie evidence of early Christian painting and sculpture. Implicit in the argument, whether pro or con, was a presumed conflict of evidence: written pronouncements proved that early Christianity was theoretically iconophobic and practically aniconic, while the oldest surviving Christian painting and sculpture proves just the opposite.

The purpose of the present study is to limit and qualify the credibility of either of the aforementioned alternatives. The oldest surviving written evidence relative to our subject is too limited in scope and in intention to support the generalization

that early Christianity was originally and normatively an aniconic religion. And in a similar manner, the oldest surviving figured material remains of Christianity are much too limited by the vagaries of geography and chronology to permit the generalization that all (or most) early Christians were happy iconophiles. Most of the artifacts which survive are funerary in character and Roman in provenience.

The figured material remains of early Christianity present many difficulties of interpretation. All of these difficulties are related, in most cases directly so, to the question of the origins and beginning of early Christian art. When did Christians first make or cultivate visual images, at the beginning of the new religion or at some later date? If the latter, was the decision to make images the result of a fundamental change of attitudes, and if so what was the substance of that change? It is certainly possible that Christians did not make or cultivate visual images until the early third century and it is equally possible that their decision to make images for the first time in the early third century was the result of a widespread and representative change of community attitudes. But until further decisive evidence is forthcoming this interpretation must remain a speculation only.

PREFACE

The historical investigation of early Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images is a subject which has been studied often and which requires no introduction. In fact this subject has been studied so often and has attracted such widespread attention that one may legitimately question the usefulness of still another study in this area. But I believe I can defend my choice of subject matter.

First and most importantly, I believe that the rigoristic interpretation of primitive Christianity oversimplifies and misrepresents the sources. Presently this interpretation has its numerous advocates; one hears an occasional dissenting voice, but mostly scholars agree that Christianity was originally, and hence normatively (sic!), iconophobic in theory and aniconic in practice. In my opinion the rigoristic theory finds very little decisive verification in the sources. Not for a moment would I deny that there was a rigoristic tendency among certain Christians at certain times thoughout the early history of the church. In other words, my purpose here isnot to vindicate the iconophilic predilections of an earlier school of Roman theologians, as if that were possible. No, rigorism was certainly present; the question is how wide-spread and representative it was. I do not think that we can refer to the position of the early church in the matter of images as rigoristic in origin. And I have even stronger doubts about the appropriateness of calling early Christianity a religion which was "normatively" aniconic. As in any historical reconstruction, this question must be resolved by an appeal to the sources. Unfortunately, relevant sources for the present study are preserved in very fragmentary form and are full of ambiguities.

The present study deals with an historical problem whose solution is complex and elusive. It is probably correct to say that there will never be a definitive treatment of this problem because the sources are so full of holes and because the starting point in the analysis of the problem can vary widely (legitimately so) from one treatment to the next. But the major difficulty which the historian confronts in dealing with the early Christian "Bilderfrage" concerns the sources; we simply do not have enough information about this subject.

In honesty, I must confess from the outset that I have had my doubts about my present choice of subject matter: I continue to have such doubts. The sources are fragmentary and difficult to interpret, the subject itself is broad and relatively unmanageable, and the conclusions are invariably tentative and subject to revision. Intelligent, comprehensive discussion of this subject requires a grasp of more than one field. What early Christians thought about visual arts and images is closely related to what pagans and Jews thought on this same matter, and knowledge of the latters' opinions requires that we not only read their literatures but also that we know what they made, i.e., their arts. Arts, after all, are *prima facie* evidence of attitudes. In other words, the literature and archaeology of Greece, Rome and Israel (as well as Judaism in the *diaspora*) are essential parts of the present study. No one can claim special competence in all of these areas, least of all a fledgling Ph.D. thesis writer like myself. The reader may judge that this study has an overly derivative character, with more than average attention paid to secondary reconstructions of primary sources. But the reader should keep in mind that the scope of this study renders this unfortunate expedient necessary.

One could go on more or less indefinitely enumerating the disadvantages in an undertaking such as the present one. But there is another consideration which supports the present choice of subject matter and which outweighs all others: the status of the visual image in early Christianity is a subject of inherent and perennial interest to all students of Western history. Visual images have played a formative role in this history;

there have been times when the visual image was nearly equal in importance to the written word as a medium of communication. In America we are addicted to visual images. We spend endless time and money in the daily production of new visual images, in television, in popular literature, in the cinema, in the advertising industry; image making is a big business in America, fittingly symbolic of our prodigious wealth and staggering national wastefulness. The present subject is of interest because it returns to the Christian origins of image-making in the West, to a point in time when the visual image was primarily a vehicle for the conveyance of religious meaning.

From the beginning of this study I have been extremely fortunate in the sound advice and generous encouragement which I have received from my two mentors and thesis co-chairmen, Professor Ernst Kitzinger and Professor George Huntston Williams. When I first approached Professor Kitzinger, he informed me that he thought it was important for young historians to deal not just with limited and detailed subject matter but also with the large issues of interpretation and synthesis. Professor Williams expressed similar views on more than one occasion. When I decided on the present subject both men offered me great encouragement. I have benefited in many ways from association with them and wish to express my great debt of gratitude to them here.

Many other people have helped me in the preparation of this study, and although I cannot mention each person by name, I am grateful to them all. To the Trustees of Harvard University who made possible two years of study at Dumbarton Oaks, my thanks, as to Merlin Packard and Gabriella Sieg, who helped me find my way around the Dumbarton Oaks library. I wish to thank Professor Beat Brenk of Basel, Switzerland, and Professor Bezalel Narkiss, of Jerusalem, Israel, both of whom shared freely and generously with me their considerable knowledge of the early Christian arts. Professor Emeritus Johannes Quasten of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. and Professor Patrick Skehan, Director of the Institute of Christian Oriental Research in the same University, helped me in matters pertaining to their areas of specialization. And at Harvard Dean Moe made important criticisms of chapter three in its preliminary form.

Finally and most importantly, I wish to thank my wife and colleague, Kathleen McVey, without whose support and encouragement this thesis would never have been written. In addition to numerous other forms of assistance, she helped me with materials relating to Hebrew, Coptic and Syriac, languages which I do not read.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The subject of the present study is the relationship between religion and the visual arts during the first, second and third centuries of the present era. The specific religion under discussion is nascent Christianity, and the problematic which it raises concerns the conflict created by the claims of religion on the one hand and those of art on the other. In many cultures other than our own and in many periods of western history, art and religion have coexisted peacefully. Sometimes art and religion complement each other to such a degree that they appear to be seeking identical ends, but even under such extreme conditions the relative autonomy of art and of religion is preserved and can be perceived, if not in the difference of ends appropriate to each, then in the difference of means employed to achieve the desired ends.[1]

There is considerable agreement today that Christianity in its earliest form(s) was both iconophobic and aniconic, that is, was hostile to images and image-making in theory and in practice.[2] The term "aniconic" is usually construed to be an appropriate description of the practical status of the earliest Christian communities: they were simply without images. The portrayal of early Christianity as normatively iconophobic in theory and universally aniconic in practice has become a convention in the scholarly literature of the past half century. This convention is rarely challenged.[3] The aim of the present study is to reconsider the oldest surviving sources relative to this subject. The thesis to be defended here concerns the character and the extent of these surviving sources and the claims which have been made in the name of these sources. It is a mistake, in my opinion, to generalize about the whole of early Christianity on the basis of the few surviving sources. Of those sources which do survive, and from which we can learn something about early Christian attitudes toward visual images and image-making, many yield ambiguous evidence. Before it becomes possible to argue that early Christianity was broadly and normatively opposed to images and image-making, it is necessary to examine once again the evidence from the surviving sources. The result of such a reexamination will be to limit the credibility of this portrayal of early Christianity.

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[1] Art is said to seek its end in the perfection of form. Religion has many ends, among them to provide a coherent and integrated conception of the entire life experience from its beginning to its end. It is not uncommon to find art subordinated or otherwise directed to ends which are determined primarily by religion; religion subordinated to art and directed by primarily aesthetic ends is historically less well documented; on this subject cf. G. van der Leeuw, Religion in Essence and Manifestation, New York, 1963.

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[2] For Hugo Koch the Christian religion in its primitive (and hence pure and normative) form could not be reconciled with any kind of artistic production. Koch writes, "Das Christentum sprengte anfänglich diese Verbindung (between art and religion) mit Wissen und Willen: ihm sind Kunst und Religion zwei gegensätzliche Gebiete, die Kunst das Reich der Schatten und der Illusion, die Religion das der Wahrheit und Wirklichkeit," Die altchristliche Bilderfrage nach den literarischen Quellen, Göttingen, 1917, 90. The terminus ad quem of the present study is approximately the mid-third century, A.D. The rationale for establishing this chronological limit is discussed in chapters two and three below.

[3] The most important study in this regard was Koch's monograph, op.cit. In his "The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm," DOP 8, 1954, 83, E. Kitzinger refers to "the categorical rejection of images which it (Christianity) proclaimed during the first two centuries of its existence." In numerous studies the early Christian hostility to visual representation has been emphasized: N. Baynes, "Idolatry and the Early Church," Byzantine Studies and Other Essays, London, 1955, 116-43: H. von Campenhausen, "Die Bilderfrage als theologisches Problem der alten Kirche," Das Gottesbild im Abendland, Witten, 1959^2, 77-108; T. Klauser, "Die Äusserungen der alten Kirche zur Kunst," Atti VI.CIAC, 223-38; J. Kollwitz, "Zur Frühgeschichte der Bilderverehrung," Gottesbild im Abendland, Witten, 1959^2, 57-76; G. Ladner, "Der Bilderstreit und die Kunstlehren der byzantinischen und abendländischen Theologie," ZKG 50, 1931, 1-23.

The terms, "visual art", "image", "monument","material remain" , and "figured remains" are used somewhat interchangeably here. They are meant to cover a broad range of meanings and correspond roughly with the primitive meaning of the word, τέχνη , i.e., "something which is made."[4] The reader should keep this primitive meaning in mind when, for instance, I make the association of the term art with the earliest material remains of Christianity. Moderns are accustomed to associate "art" with a certain excellence of material, form, and execution, in a word, with quality. Many of the artifacts which I have included in the present study are of inferior quality and hence can be classified as art only if τέχνη in its primitive meaning is understood as the equivalent of art.

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[4] E. Boisacq, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque*, Heidelberg, 1950 4^{e} éd., τεχτων ; A. Walde, J.B. Hofmann, *Lateinisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Heidelberg, 1910, zweite Aufl.,(texo) ; Giulio C. Argan, *Enciclopedia Universale dell-Arte*, Venice/Rome, 1958, 754-99 (Arte). J. Kube, *TEXNH und APETH*, Berlin, 1969, 9ff.

Equally important for terminological clarity is the distinction between τέχνη-art and φύσις -nature, a distinction which is made in paradigmatic fashion in Plato's Timaeus. Art is something conceived by man, and fashioned by his hand; art requires a knowing and conscious subject, a maker. Nature may be subjected to this process and become thereby art, as wood shaped into statuary, but in itself nature is apart and exists quite independent of human making.

It is possible that early Christian attitudes toward the visual arts are related to early Christian conceptions of the natural world. One might assume such a connection a priori, since the two realms are related in a communality of material substance. However such an assumption would be inappropriate for the present study which is concerned with an historical reconstruction based on the evidence offered in the primary sources. If the connection between art and nature is not made in the sources, then it does not have relevance for the present study. Paul, for example, reproaches the Gentiles in Romans I/20 for their failure to perceive God's presence in created things. One implication to be drawn from this is that God is present in some form within the order of creation and that his presence there can and should be felt. This is one of the early evidences of a natural theology within the Christian tradition.

But does Paul's positive estimation of the role which nature plays in disclosing the divine presence extend to other analogous forms of disclosure? May we infer from Paul's portrayal of the natural world that he would have regarded visual imagery and the pictorial arts of humankind in a similarly positive light? We know that certain Gnostic Christians held nature in low esteem. May we infer from this that these same Christians must have repudiated the use of visual arts and imagery? In both cases we are working with analogy. The appreciation of the natural world may indeed be connected with one's perception and appraisal of the visual arts, but there is no necessary connection. Such a necessity does not exist and hence I have avoided here the more speculative pursuit of possible relationships between attitudes toward nature and attitudes toward man-made arts.

The study of early Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images must rely on two types of sources, the one written, the other unwritten. Both require an attention to detail. Among the written sources surveyed here it will be necessary to consider such matters as authorship and readership, the circumstances which may have contributed to a Christian's writing about visual images, and the content of what he said about these images. Who were the Christians who wrote about visual images and what did they say? Who were their readers, whether real or imagined, and what did the authors in question hope to achieve in writing about visual images? What kind of visual images did these authors write about, and was their appreciation of visual art and pictorial imagery purely idiosyncratic or was it representative of what most Christians thought? And finally, how do the earliest Christian written statements relative to the subject correlate, if at all, with what we know about the historical period in which they were written?

The investigation of unwritten sources for the information they yield in the matter of attitudes toward visual art requires the same degree of attention to detail, although the answers which one hopes to obtain from monumental sources necessarily have a more inferential and perhaps tentative character. Monuments and artifacts may tell us little more than the degree of relative technological proficiency achieved by a given tribe in prehistory. Here there can be little or no discussion of the upper reaches of man's achievements, his intellectual, psychological, or spiritual condition. On the other hand, surviving monuments, especially if supplemented with information from written sources, can tell us considerably more than the relative stage of man's material achievements in the past. In so far as the present study is concerned with material remains, they are the remains of a culture, or subculture, which was literate and which reduced some of its oral traditions to written form at a relatively early stage in its history. The earliest surviving monuments of Christianity exhibit an iconography which is well documented in written form.

From an early date in their history groups of Christians, either as families or as churches, made monuments (or caused them to be made) and these contained pictorial themes illustrative of their beliefs. Therefore it is reasonable to look for reflections of Christian attitudes toward visual art and image-making in these monuments.

The present chapter is largely preliminary, but, nonetheless functional and necessary. My objective here is to investigate certain fundamental questions of interpretation as these apply to the study of the earliest surviving Christian monuments and material remains. It is not necessary, in my opinion, to consider the hermeneutics of early Christian literature here in the same manner, because there is greater methodological certainty in that area of study.

This chapter is written with two considerations foremost. The first of these may be set forth as a simple question: when did Christians first execute (or cause to be executed) visual arts and images, i.e., from the very beginning of their religion, or at some later date? The second consideration concerns not the absolute point of beginning but instead the origins, sources, and models of the earliest Christian visual imagery: in terms of both material forms and iconographic precedents, what sources may we say inspired the rise and development of early Christian art?

It is not immediately apparent that these two considerations have anything to do with the matter of Christian attitudes toward visual images. But, in the first instance, if it can be shown that early Christian art did not commence with Jesus but instead was introduced into Christianity at a later date, then the possibility of a change of attitude from one generation to the next becomes a serious consideration. In fact, Christianity's earliest surviving figured artifacts do not date from the Apostolic period. How do we explain this? Is this due merely to the accidents of preservation? Or is it possible that such artifacts of Apostolic date do in fact exist but their identity escapes us? This possibility has been entertained from time to time in the history of scholarship, viz., that the earliest Christian iconography was either arcane and cryptic or neutral or both, and hence objects marked with this iconography are unknown to us.

But the proposition which occupies our major attention in the present study concerns a change of attitude which is reputed to have occurred in the post-Apostolic period, a change which was sufficiently broad and representative to allow for the introduction of visual arts into Christian communities where previously such arts had been conscientiously forbidden to Christians. Was Christianity initally an iconophobic religion? Was there during the second century a gradual relaxation of iconophobic taboo? And was there some point in time, toward the end of the second century and beginning of the third century, when Christians did what they had not previously done, that is, make pictures? And finally, was the decision to make pictures a decision inspired by a fundamental change of attitudes in matters pertaining to visual images and image-making? From this brief introduction it is clear that the first consideration as outlined above, that is, the problematic beginning of early Christian art, does indeed affect our understanding of early Christian attitudes toward images. In chapter three below the bases for establishing the absolute chronology of early Christian art, from its somewhat problematic point of beginning, will be discussed. In chapter four we will assess the evidence which would link the beginning of early Christian art, judged by the oldest surviving figured artifacts, with a general change of Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images.

The second consideration, as mentioned above, concerns the typological origins and material causes of early Christian imagery and is, properly speaking, the subject of the present chapter. This subject also affects directly our understanding of early Christian attitudes toward images and image-making. If it could be shown, for instance, that the earliest repertory of visual images adapted to Christian purposes was exclusively derived from pagan prototypes then we would have to conclude that some Christians at this early stage of their history were more positively open to paganism and were more willing to learn about religious expression directly from pagan teachers than is sometimes assumed. But the subject of sources, origins, and models in the development of an early Christian tradition of pictorial imagery cannot be properly stated in terms other than a plurality of probable influences. As we shall see, in developing their language of visual imagery, Christians certainly borrowed from pagan models, but this was only one of many borrowings.

The beginning of early Christian art must be distinguished from its origins. In practice historians have inclined to confuse the two. Both beginning and origins tell us something about early Christian attitudes toward images and image-making. In the present chapter I have outlined what I regard to be the five primary theories of origin in the study of early Christian art. Scholars have debated this subject for centuries. Some have known more about early Christianity, its environment, and early Christian art than others. The reliable information available to scholars has varied greatly. The perspectives and personal preferences of individual scholars have also differed, together with their objectives in writing about the origins of early Christian art. I cannot claim to have read all of the literature on this subject, but I hope at least that I have presented the major issues of interpretation and method in a manner which is faithful to the authors who are discussed here.

The knowledge of origins is a major key to understanding early Christian art. At present, due to the fragmentary state of the sources, no final, definitive solution is possible. There is instead a plurality of possibilities and each has a certain claim to validity. For the present, the theory of the Jewish origins of early Christian art occupies the forefront of scholarly attention. Numerous positive advances in our understanding of early Christian art (and Jewish art in late antiquity) have accrued from the pursuit of this Jewish theory. We may expect more to come, especially with the burgeoning of interest in the late Hellenistic archaeology of the Near East. But it is questionable whether Jewish art will finally fill the gap, and will be shown to have been the single effective source and origin of early Christian art.

It seems more likely that early Christian visual art came into being by drawing on a number of typological sources, some of them found in Judaism and paganism, others found more internal to Christianity itself, such as prayer, and the natural urge to symbolize prayer in image and song. It is a mistake to insist, as so many have done in the past, that early Christian art derives exclusively from one typological origin. The sources simply do not permit such certainty, and the picture which emerges from such sources as do survive, is one of a plurality, not a unity, of origins.

In attempting to order this large body of literature according to the principal themes of interpretation and method I have felt very much the absence of a reliable, synthetic study of the image debate in the western medieval and modern periods. Most of the scholarship which treats the issue of early Christian art, especially on the question of attitudes toward the visual arts, is affected in some way by historical Protestant-Roman Catholic debate and polemic. But remarkably little of value has been written about the shape of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation debate over images, and equally little work is available concerning the western medieval antecedents of the sixteenth and seventeenth century conflicts. And the consequences of these historical conflicts for the history and shape of modern scholarship have never been properly considered.[5] Had space and time permitted it would have been useful to begin the present discussion with western medieval antecedents and thence to trace the issues in method and interpretation which have affected our own understanding of early Christian art. But this was not possible and hence I have restricted the present discussion to modern developments.

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[5] The only useful surveys of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation struggle over images are Hans von Campenhausen's "Die Bilderfrage in der Reformation", *ZKG* 68, 1957, 96-128 and H. Jedin's "Entstehung und Tragweite des Trienter Dekrets über die Bilderverehrung," *TQ* 116, 1935, 143-88, 404-29; and by the same author, "Das Tridentinum und die bildenden Künste", *ZKG* 74, 1963, 321-39. It should be emphasized that these are surveys and attempt to cover a large and complicated field of historical research in a very limited manner. The most important recent study in this field is Charles Garside's detailed investigation of Zwingli's *Answer to Valentin Compar*, showing the dependence of this latter treatise upon Ludwig Haetzer's *Ein urteil gottes unsers eegemahels wie man sich mit allen götzen und Bildnussen halte soll uss der heiligen gschrifft gezoge*; cf. C. Garside, "Ludwig Haetzer's Pamphlet against Images: A Critical Study," *MQR* 34, 1960, 20-36, and by the same author, *Zwingli and the Arts*, New Haven, 1966. Otherwise there exists a critical edition of Andreas Karlstadt's *Von Abtuhung der Bilder und das keyn Bedtler unther den Christen seyn sollen* ed. Hans Lietzmann, Bonn, 1911 and an informative study of Calvinby L. Wencelius, *L'Esthétique de Calvin*, Paris, n.d. (with older bibliography). The subsequent history of the Protestant-Catholic debate, known through such representative authors as Alexander, Augusti, Dallaeus, Grüneisen, Maimbourg, Molanus, Morini, Pfaff, Piper, Sickler, and Spanheim has never been written. For present purposes the most important aspect of this debate is its effect on modern scholarship.

The five interpretative approaches outlined here are only relatively distinct and separate, and hence should not be construed as exclusive of each other or as prescriptive for the study of early Christian art. These are not rules or "laws" which if diligently followed will lead to desired results. None of these approaches can be intelligently pursued if it is isolated from the insights and contributions gained from other areas of investigation. Each approach is related to other methods of interpretation, and I draw these distinctions here knowing full well that they are primarily logical distinctions and exist nowhere in unadulterated form.

Finally, it is important to note that none of these five interpretative schools is exclusively concerned with the question of the origins of early Christian art. Instead the aims of each are more comprehensive, intending to describe not only the origins and beginning of early Christian art, but also the historical development of early Christian art, the character and quality of that art in development, and the relationship of that art to other aspects of history. In each case however a theory of origins is either stated explicitly or is presumed without further proof. And although the five theories of origin outlined here are relatively distinct and different, they work the same effect in each case, that is, they determine in great degree everything else that is said about the beginning, development, and character of early Christian art. The interpretative schools are characterized by the following postulates:

1. Early Christian visual art must be seen in relationship to the intellectual or dogmatic-theological expression of the Christian religion. The origins and historical significance of the material forms in question should be understood in the light of the history of dogma (Liberal Protestantism) or dogmatic history (Roman Catholicism).

2. Early Christian visual art must be seen in relationship to the cultic-liturgical expression of the Christian religion. The origins and historical significance of this art should be set within the context of the history of spirituality and the history of prayer, especially liturgical prayer.

3. Early Christian art, like all other visual art, is essentially a formal development within the general history of art. The correct historical understanding of early Christian art is comparative and requires that it be situated

first within the appropriate stylistic context. The problem of the origins of early Christian art should be seen primarily as a search for material precedents, the forms and styles which can be shown to have influenced the vocabulary of the early Christian visual language.

4. Like many of its contemporaries early Christianity was a soteriological religion. It expressed many of its most characteristic features in forms borrowed from the late antique world of Greco-Roman syncretism. Early Christian art is one such borrowing, taken over directly from pagan religions. The origins and historical significance of early Christian art must be understood then largely in terms of the dominant religious themes present in the pagan religions of late antiquity.

5. Early Christianity is primarily the offspring of Judaism. Correct method in the study of early Christian art requires that we search for its Jewish antecedents. The major influence in the origins and formation of early Christian visual imagery was Jewish.

1. Early Christian Art and Theology

In his masterful descriptive essay on the comparative study of religion, Joachim Wach characterized theology and dogma as the intellectual expression (or expression in thought) of religious experience.[6] Despite all of their differences, Christian iconoclasts and iconophiles have frequently agreed on one point, namely that the expression of religious experience in thought, i.e., in the formalized language of dogmatic theology, is the proper explanation of religious experience expressed in visual form. It is well-known that the major historical struggles which have centered on the status of the image within Christianity have been resolved, at least on an official level, by an appeal to concepts that belong to the realm of dogmatic theology.

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[6] Joachim Wach, The Comparative Study of Religions, New York/London, 1958.

Probably the historical effort to integrate the two realms of expression, visual art and dogmatic theology, and do so by subordinating the former to theology, represents a basic epistemological fallacy. The same is true of the various efforts to write a so-called Monumentaltheologie, in which the material remains of early Christianity are ordered and interpreted in the light of the categories which have been developed for dogmatic theology.[7]

Dogmatic theology is a cognitive system, a set of symbolic statements which express certain commonly held truths formulated by Christians about their God and about the religion which acknowledges that deity. The arts of early Christianity are also symbolic statements but they are formally quite different from the propositions of dogmatic theology. Because they are so different in form, the degree of relevance which the cognitive statements of dogmatic theology can have for these arts is problematic. But there are moments in the history of Christianity when dogmatic theology and the visual arts interact, and it would be needlessly divisive to disassociate them _a priori_.[8]

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[7] The term, Monumentaltheologie, is well known to students of early Christian archaeology due to F. Piper's Einleitung in die Monumentaltheologie, Gotha, 1867. For Wilpert's contribution to this area of study cf. note 52 below.

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[8] In recent years T. Klauser and, following him, A. Stuiber have argued for the systematic disassociation of early Christian visual imagery from early Christian theology, especially for the pre-Constantinian period. Klauser in particular wants to make the study of early Christian archaeology an independent discipline, free of what he would regard to be the corrupting influence of studies in early Christianity which consider only literary sources and which do so for the purpose of reconstructing the history of doctrine. The insight which underlies Klauser's disassociation of image and word concerns the character and quality of early Christian art which Klauser identifies as "Volkskunst." In contrast to this, Klauser observes that theology and the writings of the pre-Nicene Fathers are largely the product of a sophisticated, literate, predominately clerical society. Klauser's concern to introduce higher standards of archaeological method into the study of early Christian archaeology must be viewed as a genuine contribution. On the other hand, his disassociation of image and word is unnecessarily divisive. The most obvious weakness in Klauser's theory is that the earliest Christian images are almost without exception, literary images. Hence word and image are in fact intimately affiliated in the pre-Constantinian period. For an outline of Klauser's theory of a lay, folk art which stands in opposition to episcopal authority and the theological writings of the Fathers, cf. his "Erwägungen zur Entstehung der altchristlichen Kunst," _ZKG_ 76, 1965, 1-11.

On the other hand the efforts to demonstrate the interaction of dogmatic theology and the visual arts in the period under consideration here must be judged largely unconvincing.

In the history of modern scholarship there have been two major schools of interpretation, the one Protestant the other Catholic; both have assessed the significance of the early Christian visual arts in the light of dogmatic theology and the history of dogma. Both schools, despite claims to the contrary, employ a method of history writing which is apologetic, confessional and historicistic. Both explain the origin and development of early Christian art in categories which are drawn from the realm of dogmatic theology, categories which are largely anachronistic or otherwise historically irrelevant.

The first of these schools belongs to the tradition of Protestant Liberalism which draws its initial insights from Albrecht Ritschl (1822-89) and his students.[9] Among these latter, none was more distinguished or more decisive in determining the course of modern Christian historiography than Adolf von Harnack (1849-1930). Von Harnack adopted the basic Ritschlian axiology, namely, that there is a core or essence to Christianity and that this essence which is revealed in essentially moral categories is known through the paradigmatic life of Jesus of Nazareth.[10] Von Harnack sought the inner form or the essence of Christianity so that he might structure his own life around such an essence.[11] His primary concern was man's faithfulness to God and he saw in Jesus the realization of the morally and spiritually exemplary life of faith lived out before God.

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[9] Ritschl's Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche, Bonn, 1850, 1857, influenced decisively the nineteenth century understanding of early Christianity. Ritschl's commitment to an ethical definition of the Christian life and his understanding of Christian history as a series of deforming events appeared some years later in von Harnack's Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte, Leipzig, 1886ff. For a discussion of the Ritschlian category, "Lebensführung," the moral life of faith, which had a profound influence on von Harnack's conception of a Christian essence, cf. P. Hefner, "Baur versus Ritschl on Early Christianity," CH 31, 1962, 259-78; also by the same author, "The Role of Church History in the Theology of Albrecht Ritschl," CH 33, 1964, 338-55.

When von Harnack undertook to trace the history of Christianity beyond the life of Jesus he portrayed the development of the community in history as a compromise of the original essence given in Jesus.[12] The changes and developments which occured as Christianity grew from its original status as a provincial sect to its later grandeur as an oecumenical world religion were changes which von Harnack viewed with suspicion. The story of the Christian community was in his mind largely the record of a sequence of deforming events. Von Harnack called his study of the formation of Christian thought the history of dogma, thereby giving emphasis to the fact that Christian thought is not something eternally given once and for all, but is instead contingent and subject to the same vagaries of time, place, and personality which shape all religious belief. As early Christianity began to develop its oecumenical outreach, it acquired new thought patterns and life styles which were, in von Harnack's mind, frequently foreign and hostile to the original essence of Christianity. Von Harnack classified these foreign intrusions on the original essence under the general rubric of "Hellenization", and he documented his theory impressively with examples drawn from all areas of early Christian life and thought.[13]

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[10] For a discussion of Ritschlian axiology as the primary influence upon Von Harnack, cf. G. Wayne Glick, *The Reality of Christianity*, N.Y., 1967, 42-53, 68-84.

[11] In the winter semester, 1899-1900, at the University of Berlin, von Harnack delivered a series of extemporaneous lectures which grew into *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Leipzig, 1900. In these lectures von Harnack isolated one datum of meaning in Christian history, identified this datum as the irreducible basis of all Christianity, and then proceeded to discuss the rest of Christianity in terms of this datum.

[12] See the section entitled "Das Evangelium in der Geschichte" in *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Leipzig, 1900, 96-189.

Von Harnack never addressed the issue of images and visual arts in the early church. On the other hand one gets occasional glimpses and indications of how he would have treated the subject; von Harnack regarded the introduction of visual arts into Christianity and their subsequent cultivation as a sign of secularization and Hellenization.[14]

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[13] The outline which von Harnack was to follow in his Dogmengeschichte can be found schematically presented in his Grundriss der Dogmengeschichte, Freiburg, 1889.

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[14] "Reliquien und Bilder verehrter Wesen zu begehren, sie aus dem profanen Gebrauche auszuscheiden und mit inniger Pietät zu behandeln, ist dem Menschen natürlich. In Bezug auf Alles, was mit der Gottheit zusammenhing, hatte sich das Christentum ursprunglich diesem Triebe widersetzt, um nicht in Idololatrie zu verfallen," *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, Tübingen, 1931, Bd. II, 479; cf. also 478, note 2. Cf. A. von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums*, Leipzig, 1924, Bd.I. 300-331, Here, what brief mention there is of the arts takes place within the context of a discussion of the syncretization of Christianity in the latter half of the third century. While von Harnack never dealt extensively with the question of Christianity and the visual arts in any of his major publications, there is evidence that he was interested in some areas of the problem. In 1876 von Harnack collaborated with Emil Schürer to found the *Theologische Literaturzeitung*, the organ of the Ritschlian school. It is in his reviews of books on early Christian archaeology that von Harnack's interests are evident. Cf. reviews of: V. Schultze, *Die Katakomben von San Gennaro dei Poveri in Neapel*, Jena, 1877, in *ThLZ*, 2 Jahrgang, 1877, 546-547; F.X. Kraus, *Roma Sotterranea*, Freiburg, 1879, in *ThLZ*, 4 Jahrgang, 1879, 97-100; F.X. Kraus, *Über Begriff, Umfang, Geschichte der christlichen Archäologie...*, Freiburg, 1879, in *ThLZ*, 4 Jahrgang, 1879, 384; *Realencyklopädie der christlichen Altertümer*, Freiburg, 1880, in *ThLZ*, 5 Jahrgang, 1880, 301 and *ThLZ*, 6 Jahrgang, 1881, 141; F.X. Kraus, *Synchronistische Tabellen zur christlichen Kunstgeschichte*, Freiburg, 1880, in *ThLZ*, 6 Jahrgang, 1881, 140; V. Schultze, *Die Katakomben*, Leipzig, 1882, in *ThLZ*, 7 Jahrgang, 1882, 368-74; V. Schultze, *Der theologische Ertrag der Katakombenforschung*, Leipzig, 1882, in *ThLZ*, 7 Jahrgang, 1882, 607-612. In his reviews of Kraus' work von Harnack is particularly critical of the chronological uncertainties upon which the discipline of Christian archaeology rests. He points to Kraus as an example of the uncritical manner in which archaeologists are accustomed to treat literary and epigraphic sources. A rather acrimonious debate between von Harnack and Schultze was occasioned by von Harnack's review, *ThLZ* 7, 1882, 368-74. Later in the same year von Harnack wrote a comprehensive review of Schultze's work, in which he made it clear that he regarded the study of early Christian monuments as a largely useless undertaking. According to von Harnack much less can be learned about early Christianity from a

Two important studies of the problematic created by images in the early church appeared in the first third of this century. Both authors, Hugo Koch and Walter Elliger, interpreted the problem within a theoretical framework which shows great dependency on von Harnack's Dogmengeschichte. At the time of its appearance Koch's study, Die altchristliche Bilderfrage nach den literarischen Quellen, Göttingen, 1917, gained relatively little recognition.[15] Since that time, particularly in the light of Elliger's later popularization and expansion of Koch's thesis, Koch's book must be regarded as the basic work in the field. It portrays early Christian attitudes toward images on the basis of selections drawn from the writings of the Fathers.

Koch opens his study by pointing to the frequent imposition of dogma upon history and cites as offenders

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14 con't study of material evidences than was claimed by Schultze. Von Harnack writes, "Für das 2. und 3. Jahrhundert ist der Ertrag jener mühsamen Forschungen (i.e., in Christian archaeology) aut nullus aut incertus," ThLZ 7, 1882, 607. This highly sceptical attitude toward the study of non-literary sources is characteristic of von Harnack and many of his students. Von Harnack was curiously uncritical in his reviews of Wilpert's major publications on the catacomb paintings and the mosaics of Rome; cf. ThLZ 29, 1904, 16-18 and ThLZ 42, 1917, 52-56.

[15] Brief reviews appeared by K. Bihlmeyer, TQ, 101, 1920, 328-29 and W. Neuss, TRev 17, 1918, 157-62. Neuss, then professor of archaeology at the University of Bonn, drew attention to the fact that Koch's argument was unbalanced because he drew all of his conclusions on the basis of literary sources.

in this regard the archaeologists, F.S. Kraus and the theologian A. Knöpfler, both Roman Catholics.[16] Koch then chides his Protestant confrères for treating the problematic of images in the early church in too offhand a fashion.[17] Then follows the substance of Koch's study: a survey of negative pronouncements concerning images collected from the writings of the Latin and Greek Fathers and from miscellaneous church orders. This collection of literary evidences is the major accomplishment and enduring contribution of Koch's study. It testifies to a vigorous anti-image sentiment within the early history of the Christian religion.

In assembling these literary evidences, Koch's objective is to harmonize the problematic of images with his own Liberal conception of the early Christian religion. First and foremost is his belief that early Christianity was in its essence both iconophobic and aniconic.[18] Christians were opposed in principle and in fact to the art of paganism, to profane or neutral art, and to the possibility of a Christian sacred art.[19] There was nothing even implicit within the religion of early Christianity which would allow for the cultivation of the visual arts. For Koch the introduction of images into the early church goes hand in hand with the secularization and paganization of Christianity for which especially the Roman church is responsible.[20]

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[16] F.X. Kraus, Die Kunst bei den alten Christen, Frankfurt, 1868. A. Knöpfler, "Der angebliche Kunsthass der ersten Christen," Festschrift Georg von Hertling, Kempten, München, 1913, 41-48. Koch finds one exception to the traditional Catholic interpretation in F.X. Funk, Kirchengeschichtliche Abhandlungen und Untersuchungen, Bd. I, Paderborn, 1897, 346-52.

[17] Koch, op.cit., 1, note 1.

[18] Koch, op.cit., 86.

In an effort to explain the early Christian aversion to images Koch introduces five primarily historical observations which he believes explain the causes of this aversion. The first of these concerns Israel and the early church. Christianity is the daughter of Israel and inherits the Jewish taboo against all forms of visual representation. Like Israel, the early church held strictly to this taboo in a cultural milieu which was saturated with idolatrous images.[21] The second cause of the Christian aversion to images is the just-mentioned association of idolatry with image and the ubiquity of iconic idolatry within the world of late antiquity.[22] Thirdly, Koch connects the early Christian aversion to images with eschatology. The early

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[19] ibid., 81-83.

[20] ibid., 88.

[21] ibid., 86.

[22] ibid., 81-105.

Christians lived in a time sequence which was radically future oriented; they looked to the eschaton and the return of their Lord to the community of the faithful. Under such conditions of expectation it is understandable that the early Christians had neither the time nor the money nor the inclination to divert themselves with objects of physical beauty.[23] Koch's fourth observation concerns the early Christian conception of the deity as spirit. The early Christians consciously avoided any confusion or identification of God's personal infinitude with any aspect of his material creation.[24] And lastly, Koch argues that the only appropriate and adequate response to such a spiritual and infinite deity was a response of inward beauty, a spiritual reflection of the deity.[25] Apart from this internal response to the deity the early Christians responded on a more external level through acts of moral goodness.[26]

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[23] ibid., 3, 84. Since Koch's monograph it has become a commonplace, to interpret the apparent absence of Christian images in the first two centuries of Christian history in the light of eschatological developments. Normally the introduction of images into the various Christian communities is connected, as it is in Koch's work, with some form of the "Parusieverzögerungsproblem." Stated somewhat simply, the argument would run that the loss of intense eschatological expectation and the consequent accomodation to the vagaries of life in this world coincides with the introduction of images. But the effort to discern a continuity of development in early Christian eschatology, in the manner of A. Schweitzer or M. Werner, is far from vindicated and hence the premise upon which the introduction of images is supposed to rest may be misleading; cf. C.F.D. Moule, "The Influence of Circumstances on the Use of Eschatological Terms," JThS 15, 1964, 1-15 and L.W. Barnard, "Justin Martyr's Eschatology," VC 19, 1965, 86-98.

[24] Koch, op.cit., 93-99.

[25] ibid., 85, n.1.

The problem of early Christian attitudes toward the visual arts was discussed again in 1930 by Walter Elliger, in his, Die Stellung der alten Christen zu den Bildern in den ersten vier Jahrhunderten, Leipzig, 1930. Elliger's objective was to reinvestigate the literary sources of early Christianity as worked through by Koch in 1917 to see what light might be thrown on the issue of early Christian attitudes toward images. Elliger was also aware of the potential importance of the early Christian monuments themselves and promised a sequel volume which would treat the development of early Christian art on a regional basis. This second volume did appear in 1934, but it does not throw any new light on the question of Christian attitudes toward images.[27] In his first volume Elliger shows great dependence on Koch and adds very little new literary evidence; and, despite his claim to the contrary, his conclusions are substantially in accord with those of his predecessor.[28]

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[26] ibid., 87, n.1.

[27] W. Elliger, Zur Entstehung und frühen Entwicklung der altchristlichen Bildkunst (Die Stellung der alten Christen zu den Bildern in den ersten vier Jahrhunderten/Teil 2), Leipzig, 1934. The potential historical value of Elliger's second volume as an historical monograph is great. Unfortunately this value is obscured by Elliger's interest in spirituality, theology, development of doctrine, and intellectual history. For an informative, critical review of Elliger's second volume, cf., F. Gerke, Gnomon 11, 1935, 265-72; also H. Koch, PhilWoch, 54, 1934, 1007-09.

Elliger's major addition to Koch's earlier study is his more ideological and more elaborate portrayal of Christianity through the fourth century. Elliger adopts all of the five above mentioned historical observations made initially by Koch and claims that they characterize accurately the earliest generations of Christians.[29] In discussing the character of apostolic Christianity Elliger emphasizes, in addition, the importance of pneumatological possession. The earliest Christians were spiritualists and enthusiasts, conscious of having been indwelled by the spirit.[30] In an aside Elliger is anxious to establish that this indwelling should not be imagined as involving a substantial or ontological change in man.[31] For Elliger the proper consequence of being filled with the spirit is the ethical life, activity in word and deed.[32] The visual image can have no place in such a practical-ethical religion.[33]

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[28] In response to a review by H. von Campenhausen, Elliger denies this; cf. Zur Entstehung..., VIII, n.1. Although he added very little to Koch's earlier work Elliger gained considerably greater recognition, and criticism: cf. reviews by G. Grützmacher, TLb 52, 1931, 83-84; B. Capelle, RTAM 3, 1931, 216-17; Hans von Campenhausen, ThLZ 51, 1931, 468-69; E. Buonaiuti, RR 8, 1932, 363; R. Vielliard, RSPT 21, 1932, 521.

[29] Elliger, Die Stellung der alten Christen zu den Bildern in den ersten vier Jahrhunderten, Leipzig, 1930, 1-11.

[30] ibid., 7.

[31] ibid., 7.

Elliger contrasts this apostolic Christianity with the later, in his mind, degenerated forms of Christianity. Pneumatic enthusiasm is gradually suppressed and replaced by magical realism. Elliger suggests that a concern for actual presence is gradually overshadowed by a concern for real presence.[34] The introduction of images into Christianity and their subsequent cultivation is, he maintains, coincidental with the origins and development of a sacramental system. Both are expressions of the same spirit, namely, the vulgarizing spirit of magic, the effort to translate (and hence reduce) the infinite to conditions of material contingency. For Elliger the Hellenization of Christian spirituality is to be understood as man's historical effort to apprehend and control the deity.[35]

As phenomena within the comparative study of religion, sacrament and image are probably related. Von Dobschütz demonstrated that sacrament and image are frequently related in Christian history when the sacramental claims for a real ontological presence are transferred to images.[36] But at least for the pre-Constantinian period there is no conclusive evidence that sacrament and image are related as parallel manifestations of a magical impulse within the Christian community.[37] Elliger, like Koch before him, insisted that early Christianity was in its essence an aniconic religion, a practical-ethical religion free of contemplation.[38] Probably this characterization tells us as much about nineteenth century Liberal Protestantism as it does about early Christianity.[39] In details the interpretative framework set forth by Koch and Elliger in order to explain the causes of the early Christian aversion to images is anachronistic and misleading. The most important contribution of their work is not their interpretation but rather the collection of sources which they have assembled, sources which, while still in need of interpretation, provide at least face-value evidence of a rather widespread early Christian opposition to certain kinds of images.

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[32] ibid., 7.

[33] ibid., 7.

[34] As described for instance in, J. Betz, Die Eucharistie in der Zeit der griechischen Väter, Bd. I/1 (Aktualpräsenz) and Bd. II/1 (Realpräsenz), Freiburg, 1955,61.

[35] Elliger, Die Stellung..., passim, esp. 1-16.

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[36] Ernst von Dobschütz, Christusbilder, Leipzig, 1899.

[37] Elliger inherited from Liberal Protestantism his anti-sacramentalism and his association of the primitive Christian sacraments, baptism and the eucharist, with magic. It is not the place here to discuss the complex problem of the origin and significance of the early Christian sacraments. The association of early Christian sacraments with magic or the contention that apostolic Christianity was a-sacramental or anti-sacramental are themes which appear rather infrequently in contemporary scholarship; cf. H. Köster, "Geschichte und Kultus im Johannesevangelium und bei Ignatius von Antiochen," ZTK 54, 1957, 59-69 and R. Brown, New Testament Essays, Milwaukee, 1965, 51-76.

[38] "man kann...aussprechen, dass die Herstellung von Bildern dem Wesen des Urchristentums zuwider war...Es lebte in diesen ersten Generationen eine so eigentümliche, teilweise in Schwärmerei sich überschlagende Hochgespanntheit, eine so ungemeine Intensität des Bewusstseins, geisterfüllt zu sein, dass alle äussere Vermittlung nur ein Hindernis auf dem Wege zu Gott bedeutet hätte .... Im sittlichen Leben sollte sich der Besitz des Geistes zeigen." Elliger, Die Stellung... 6,7.

It is useful to recall that the manner of setting forth the early Christian "Bilderfrage," as adopted by Koch and Elliger, is not without precedent in the history of Christianity. In fact the model is found in the Biblical and Patristic florilegia drawn up by the opposing parties during the first (726-75) and second (813-42) phases of the iconoclastic controversy.[40] Although their monographs are different both in the manner of presenting the sources and in the quantity of documentation adduced to illustrate the breadth of the early Christian "Bilderfrage," still the works of Koch and Elliger reflect an essential continuity with the methods adopted by the council Fathers during the iconoclastic period.

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[39] Although von Harnack and Ritschlian Liberalism are the immediate background of the Koch Elliger interpretation its roots beyond the nineteenth century are to be found in the Reformation. In the matter of practical aniconism the tendency of some Protestant authors has been to minimize or otherwise deny the significance of early Christian archaeological remains. The best known example of this is Calvin who in his Institutes, I/11/13 suggested that there were no images in Christian churches for approximately the first five hundred years of Christianity. For Calvin the introduction of images into Christianity was the result of a degenerating clergy.

[40] The beginning of official iconoclasm is traditionally connected with Leo's (now lost) first edict against icons: cf. Liber Pontificalis, (ed. L. Duchesne), Paris, 1884-92, I, 405/9-11, and G. Ostrogorsky, "Les débuts de la querelle des images," Mélanges Charles Diehl I, 1930, 235-55.

The fundamental issue at stake then was the nature of the true religious image, and at one level, perhaps the most critical level, this issue was resolved as an integral part of dogmatic theology, in particular, of Christology.[41]

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[41] The iconoclastic theory of the true religious image is discussed in M. Anastos, "The Ethical Theory of Images Formulated by the Iconoclasts in 754 and 815," DOP 8, 1954, 151-60. For the iconodulic position cf., G. Ostrogorsky, Studien zur Geschichte des byzantinischen Bilderstreites, Breslau, 1929, 40-45. The Christological argument does not become determinative until the eighth century; cf. Kitzinger, op.cit. 83-149, for earlier developments. Among the iconodules it was John of Damascus who first elaborated the relationship between image and Christology, esp. in his three Orations against the iconoclasts written between 726 and 730.
In so far as John perceived a relationship between the image and Christology, it was the doctrine of the incarnation, rather than the person-nature doctrine, which formed the basis of his observations and arguments; this was correctly emphasized in K. Schwarzlose, Der Bilderstreit, Gotha, 1890, 188. For instance, in his first Oration John writes: Διὸ θαῤῥῶν, εἰκονίζω Θεὸν τὸν ἀόρατον οὐχ ὡς ἀόρατον ἀλλ' ὡς ὁρατὸν δι' ἡμᾶς γεγόμενον μεθέξει σαρκός τε καὶ αἵματος. οὐ τὴν ἀόρατον εἰκονίζω θεότητα, ἀλλ' εἰκονίζω θεοῦ τὴν ὁραθεῖσαν σάρκα. MPG 94, 1236c. Among the iconoclasts it was the emperor himself, Constantine V, who first pursued the Christological inferences of the image doctrine.

Constantine's importance for the iconoclastic Silentium of Hiereia in 754 was emphasized in Ostrogorsky, op.cit., 1-45. The Emperor's two Inquiries (πευσεῖς) formed the

But while the Christological argument looms large in the councils' determinations, the importance of this argument should not be allowed to obscure the equally important role played by tradition. Both iconoclasts and iconodules defended their respective positions by the appeal to tradition understood as testimonies from the Old and New Testaments, quotations from the Fathers, and citations of actual or fictitious historical precedents. Both parties believed (erroneously) that there had been from the very beginnings of the Christian religion an orthodox and normative belief in the matter of images,and each was convinced that its position alone was more fully consistent with that normative past. Hence to prove their point each party assembled *florilegia* of quotations.[42]

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41 con't backbone of the *Horos* drawn up by the *Silentium.* Fragments of the Inquiries are preserved in Nicephorus' *Antirrhetici* I and II; cf. Ostrogorsky, *op.cit*. 8-11. Fragments 1, 19, and 24 contain arguments from tradition. As was demonstrated by Ostrogorsky in a comparison of the Inquiries with the *Horos*, the Emperor grasped the importance of the Christological argument but his manner of expressing the theological implications of his original insight was in need of extensive revision before it became acceptable to the *Silentium*.

[42] Some of this material, as it relates to both periods of the iconoclastic controversy, is summarized in E.J. Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, London, n.d., 130-49, 191-98. The fictitious historical precedents included readings from the apocryphal *Acts of John* and from the Abgar legend, both of these during the fifth session of the Council of Nicea; cf. J.D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova et Amplissima Collectio*, Florence, 1759 ff., XII, 168-72, 189-92. The *florilegium* of patristic quotations which was used at the iconoclastic Council of St. Sophia

42 con't in 815 is preserved in the second part of Nicephorus' Ἔλεγχος καὶ Ἀνατροπή; cf. P. Alexander, "The Iconoclastic Council of St. Sophia (815) and Its Definition (Horos)," *DOP* 7, 1953, 60-65. John of Damascus, who is perhaps best known for his Christological defense of images, used the argument from tradition extensively. Citations from Scripture and the Fathers run throughout each of his orations; cf. B. Studer, *Die theologische Arbeitsweise des Johannes von Damaskus*, Ettal, 1956, 57-101. Other prominent iconodulic sources which enlist the authority of tradition are the letters of Gregory II to Leo III, Mansi *op.cit.* XII, 959 ff.,cf. Martin *op.cit.* 36, the letter of Hadrian I to the corulers Irene and Constantine VI, Mansi, *op.cit.* XII, 1050-72, the letter of Tarasius to the Patriarchs of Antioch,Alexandria, and Jerusalem, Mansi, *op.cit.* XII, 1119-27, and the transcript of the synodical letter which Theodore, Patriarch of Jerusalem, had sent to Cosmas of Alexandria and Theodore of Antioch, Mansi, *op.cit.* XII, 1135-45. In his above mentioned letter Hadrian expressed the conviction that Irene and her son had persevered in the orthodox faith and that this faith was evident in them as it had been in their predecessors, Constantine and Helen, who were known for having erected sacred images worthy of veneration; Mansi, *op.cit.* XII, 1056e. Hadrian traced the origins of image worship to Peter and the very beginnings of the Christian religion; Mansi, *op. cit.* XII, 1057, 1060e. Tarasius and the other signatories to the second session of the council ratified the tradition referred to in Hadrian's letter; Mansi, *op.cit.* XII 1086b. The iconodulic argument from tradition is especially prominent in the fourth and fifth sessions of the council and it plays an important role in the council's final *Horos* read by Theodore, Biship of Taurania; Mansi, *op.cit.* XIII, 337c,d. It appears that the iconoclasts were equally impressed by the argument from tradition, albeit a different tradition. For the iconoclasts there was no basis in tradition, either from Christ, or from the Apostles, or from the Fathers, for image veneration, and so they argued in the *Horos* and anathemas preserved from the iconoclastic *Silentium* of Hiereia in 754; Mansi, *op.cit.* XIII, 268b-269b. The iconoclasts regarded the use of images as a mark of idolatry which had been condemned not only in the Old and New Testaments, but also in Patristic literature; cf. M. Anastos, "The Argument for Iconoclasm as Presented by the Iconoclastic Council of 754," *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honor of A.M. Friend, Jr.*, (ed. K. Weitzmann), Princeton, 1955, 177-88. The iconoclastic version of the argument from tradition also occurs in the above mentioned πευσεῖς of Constantine V, composed just prior

E. J. Martin remarked parenthetically that the quotations assembled by iconoclast and iconodule alike were frequently misunderstood or were historically irrelevant and often did not illustrate what they were supposed to illustrate.[43] As one would expect of scholarship produced in the period of modern historical criticism, the documentation set forth by Koch and Elliger is more comprehensive and more pertinent to the issue. But only to a degree. In particular they are to be faulted for not having distinguished clearly the different types of Christian arguments against images, the different types of images argued against, and the literary, historical contexts in which such arguments appear. In chapter two below I have tried to provide some of this information.

As I suggested above, iconophobes and iconophiles have often agreed on at least one point, namely that the expression of religious experience in visual imagery can best be understood and explained in the language of another symbol system, in this case, theology and dogma. In the period of modern scholarship the second major school which has tried to interpret art in the light of formalized thought is the Roman school. Its roots like those of its

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42 con't to the _Silentium_ of 754, and is evident in the text of the _Horos_ drawn up by the council of St. Sophia in 815, as reconstructed by Alexander, _op.cit._, 35-66.

[43] Martin, _op.cit._, 99.

Protestant rival are to be found in the sixteenth century.[44]

The most celebrated and, alas, notorious member of the Roman school was Joseph Wilpert (1857-1944).[45] Wilpert's interpretative and methodological principles (which are those of the Roman school in general) are exactly the antithesis of the above-mentioned Liberal Protestantism. In the latter the origin and development as well as the significance of Christian art is made to coincide with the history of dogma, or more specifically with the progressive undoing and Hellenization of the Christian essence (*Wesen*) which was given once and for all in the period of primitive Christianity. The Roman school of historiography has tended to deny or otherwise supress the existence of the history of dogma. Harnack wrote his *Dogmengeschichte* out of the conviction that Christianity underwent certain fundamental changes and metamorphoses in the course of its history. By contrast, Wilpert's writing is inspired by the conviction that in its essence, which is understood to be dogma, Christianity is unchanged; the permanent validity and unchanged character of normative faith is Wilpert's point of departure. The dogmatic truth of the present is construed in Wilpert's writings as identical with the dogmatic truth of the past. Frequently Wilpert uses the material evidence of early Christianity in order to vindicate a dogmatic truth arrived atin a period historically remote from the early church. Nowhere is this more evident than in Wilpert's lifelong obsession with the defence of Rome's primacy in matters of art as in all other matters of life and thought.[46]

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[44] Useful studies of the Roman school of archaeology are provided in G. Ferretto, *Note storico bibliografiche di archeologia cristiana*, Città del Vaticano, 1942, and P. Fremiotti, *La riforma cattolica del secola sesto e gli studi di archeologia cristiana*, Rome, 1926. The official seat of this school is presently the Pontificio Istituto di Archeologia Christiana (PIAC), via Napoleone III/1, in Rome, and its official publication is the *Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana*, 1924 ff., which continues *the Nuovo Bulletino di Archeologia Christiana*, 1895-1922, and de Rossi's *Bulletino di Archeologia Christiana*, 1863-94.

[45] For biographical information cf. Enrico Josi, *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, XII, Città del Vaticano, 1954, 1691-92 and Josef Sauer, *Das Münster* I, München, 1947/48, 118-22; also Wilpert's own account of his professional activities in his *Erlebnisse und Ergebnisse im Dienste der christlichen Archäologie*, Freiburg, 1930.

Wilpert could not distinguish between the Roman Catholic truth of the present and the Christian truth of the past. For him they were identical, and hence his work as history must be judged a failure. At the same time Wilpert was an assiduous antiquarian and archaeologist. In assembling and making available the arts of early

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[46] Cf. his article, "Die altchristliche Kunst Roms und des Orients," *ZKT* 45, 1921, 337-69, which was largely a defense of the Rome hypothesis in answer to Strzygowski's challenge, *Orient oder Rom?*, Leipzig, 1901, and the enthusiastic response which this book evoked. Also by Wilpert: "S. Pietro nelle piu cospicue sculture cimiteriali antiche," *Studi Romani* 3, 1922, 14-34 and *La fede della chiesa nascente secondo i monumenti dell'arte funeraria antica*, Roma, 1938, 146-216. For critical remarks, cf. E. Weigand, "Die spatantike Sarkophagskulptur im Lichte neuerer Forschungen," *BZ* 41, 1941, 129-46.

Christianity Wilpert did for early Christian archaeology what von Harnack did for its literary history. Wilpert's energy was legendary, his determination was unwaivering, and the product was monumental.[47]

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[47] Wilpert's predecessors in the school of Roman archaeology were scholars of distinction; this is particularly true of Antonio Bosio (1575-1629) and Giovanni Battista de Rossi (1822-94). But in sheer quantity Wilpert's work exceeded the efforts of his predecessors. After his education in Germany and Austria, Wilpert came to Rome where he was scheduled to remain for two years; he stayed for an extra fifty eight. During these years of study and travel Wilpert produced three major works, *in toto* eleven folio volumes, two of them dealing with the catacomb paintings, five with the early Christian sarcophagi of the Mediterranean world, and four with the mosaics and wall paintings of the Roman churches from the fourth to thirteenth centuries. In addition Wilpert produced an uninterrupted series of smaller books and articles. A bibliography of his writings was published on the occasion of his eightieth birthday by G.P. Kirsch, *RivAC* XV, 1938, 6-16. After 1938, his writings include: "Coperchio del sarcofago di Giunio Basso," *RivAC*, 1938, 331-39; "Due sarcofagi recentemente scoperti a S. Sebastiano," *RivAC* 16, 1939, 243-46; "Sarcofago dei pastori nell'Isola Sacra," *RivAC* 16, 1939, 317-19; "Fustigazione rituale," *Roma* 17, 1939, 49-53; "La preghiera 'Domine non sum dignus ut intres sub tectum meum' nell'arte funeraria," *BACrist* 9, 1939, 121-23. The technical quality of the reproductions which appear in Wilpert's major publications was superior to anything which had been produced in the nineteenth century. This is largely due to Wilpert's insistence on clear photographic reproduction. At the same time Carlo Tabinelli's renditions of the catacomb paintings are often misleading, especially in their overstatement of color purity and clarity. A large section of Wilpert's *Erlebnisse* (originally written as lectures to be delivered at Harvard) is devoted to questions of technique is reproducing monuments; cf. his *Die Katakombengemälde und ihre alten Copien. Eine ikonographische Studie*, Freiburg, 1892. It is well-known that Wilpert's own reconstructions of lapidary monuments, based often on miniscule fragments, are largely unreliable; for critical remarks, cf. Marion Lawrence, *ArtB* 13, 1931, 532-36; 16, 1934, 309-13.

Because Wilpert's work is of such fundamental importance for the study of early Christian archaeology it has received a great deal of attention and criticism.[48] Most of the serious criticism of his work has been directed at factual errors and distortions. He dated the earliest material remains of Christianity too early.[49] His iconographic identifications are often inaccurate.[50] He ordered and classified the materials of early Christian archaeology according to the traditional division of subject matter found in the then current handbook of dogmatic theology. It never occurred to Wilpert that this method of classifying archaeological materials was obscurantist or that it would cause the generations of scholars who had to rely on his work considerable "Kopfzerbrechen." Wilpert's tendency to regard all of early Christian art as a new creation within the history of comparative art forms, an art sui generis, independent of pagan or Jewish antecedents is another of his faulty presuppositions.[51]

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[48] The best discussion of Wilpert's work, although it deals only with his study of sarcophagi, is Weigand's article, op.cit., 104-64.

[49] Cf. Wilpert's "Chronologie der altchristlichen Sarkophage," RQ 30, 1922, 29-37. In chapter three below I have discussed the chronology of the earliest material remains of Christianity.

[50] Weigand, op.cit., passim.

[51] Wilpert dismissed and ridiculed all efforts to show the formal dependence of Christian art on pagan prototypes. Together with his predecessors in the Roman school Wilpert believed that the early Christians modelled their art forms on observations from nature; cf. Weigand, op.cit., 115.

To a degree Wilpert's intentions in the matter of interpretation can be defended. He tried to provide the scholarly world with a consistent and synthetic, symbolic-religious interpretation of early Christian art, a *Monumentaltheologie*.[52] Wilpert understood, as many have not, that early Christian art testified to a new religious consciousness. Early Christian art was primarily religious art. One may discuss other aspects of this art, its political, economic, social, stylistic, or cultural implications, but these are always secondary to its primary meaning for the comparative history of religion and, more particularly, for the history of Christianity. Today, nearly thirty years after his death, the kind of interpretative synthesis which Wilpert incorrectly thought he had achieved is still a major *desideratum* within the study of early Christian history.

Apart from a brief review article of a study by Karl Holl, Wilpert never addressed the question of early

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[52] Wilpert defended his conception of *Monumentaltheologie* throughout his scholarly career. Cf. *Prinzipienfragen der christlichen Archäologie*, Freiburg, 1889; "Nochmals Prinzipienfragen der christlichen Archäologie," *RQ* 4, 1890, 44-60; *Il valore dommatico delle pitture cimiteriali*, Rome, 1897; "Wahre und falsche Auslegung der altchristlichen Archäologie," *ZKT* 46, 1922, 1-19, 177-211; *Erlebnisse und Ergebnisse....*; "Die Bedeutung der altchristlichen Skulpturen für Lehre, Kult, und Leben im Reiche Christi auf Erden," *Christi Reich auf Erden*, München, 1933, 147-58; *La fede della chiesa nascente secondo i monumenti dell'arte funeraria antica*, Rome, 1938; also volume two of *I sarcofagi cristiani antichi*, 1-22, 355-60.

Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images.[53] He was foremost an antiquarian anxious to preserve the archaeological heritage of early Christianity and to defend a particular conception of religion with material evidences. Conviction required that he ignore or deny the possible typological dependence of early Christian pictorial imagery on pre-Christian models. This, together with the fact that he thought he could date the material remains of early Christianity into the apostolic period, obscured his appreciation of the problematic created by an early Christian art. Wilpert saw no opposition between the visual image and the early Christian religion and in this he was diametrically opposed to scholars nurtured in Liberal Protestantism.

2. Early Christian Art and Liturgical Prayer.

Scholars whose perspectives and objectives differ as much as those of Koch and Wilpert have often agreed that early Christian art should be interpreted in the language of theology and doctrine. This is not surprising. As was mentioned above, the classical historical controversy over the nature of the true religious image was resolved in great degree by an appeal to analogies drawn from the sphere of dogmatic theology. To the degree that this method was applied and adopted, historical Christianity has encouraged the impression that there is a normative Christian way of understanding the status and significance of visual imagery. This understanding would entail the systematic application of theological language to the iconographic and formal constituents of visual imagery. But the greatest positive advances in our understanding of the monuments of early Christianity have resulted from the historical, not the theological, study of the resources. In the present section of this chapter and in the following three sections we will be concerned with insights gained from the historical study of early Christian art.

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[53] The study in question is Holl's *Die Schriften des Epiphanius gegen die Bilderverehrung*, Berlin, 1916. Wilpert's review appears in *HJ* 38, 1917, 532-35.

One of the most permanent contributions to our understanding of early Christian art has resulted from the search for its origins in a cultic context. Students of ancient and modern religion have frequently noted the coincidence of visual imagery with cultic places. All of the several studies which have sought to establish the dependency of image upon cult in early Christianity have regarded the cultic or liturgical element as a primitive and permanent feature of Apostolic Christianity. These studies have simply presupposed the early origins of the sacramental life and have opposed the anti-sacramental or non-sacramental picture of the early church proposed in recent years by Rudolph Bultmann and by his disciples.[54]

A rather romanticized version of the theory that Christian art was born in a cultic context was advanced in this century by Odo Casel, the legendary monk of Maria Laach.[55] Before Casel, the abbot of the community, Ildefons Herwegen, had expressed an interest in the problems of early Christian art, but it was Casel who made the most important contribution to the study of early Christian art in the form of a long interpretative essay published in 1932, entitled, "Älteste christliche Kunst und Mysterium."[56] For Casel early Christian art is like early Christian cult, that is, art is an expression of the basic mystery character of the Christian religion. Art and cult are in a sense parallel or analogous manifestations of the same mystery, although cult precedes art historically and is its cause.[57] The basic objective of Casel's essay was to demonstrate how early Christian art could be regarded as a vital expression of early Christianity understood as a synthesis of various elements, especially cultic elements, drawn from the pagan mysteries. Casel never dealt with the historical complications which were raised by his theory of early Christian art. While he was surely aware that his theory was open to substantial criticism because of its somewhat cavalier dismissal of chronological and historical details, Casel himself never dealt in writing with these issues. Casel should be described as a "friend of the arts." While he maintained a lifelong interest in both the historical and practical problems of Christian art, Casel's main commitment was to sacramental theology, and in particular to a defense of his own theory of the *Kulteidos-Mysterium*.[58]

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[54] Cf. n. 38.

[55] A bibliography of Casel's writings appears in Vom Christlichen Mysterium (ed. A. Mayer, B. Neunheuser, J. Quasten), Düsseldorf, 1951, 363-75.

[56] I. Herwegen, Kirch und Seele, Die Seelenhaltung des Mysterienkultes und ihr Wandel im Mittelalter, Münster, 1928; Christliche Kunst und Mysterium, Munster, 1929; Dom Odo Casel, "Älteste christliche Kunst und Christusmysterium," JbL 12, 1932, 1-86.

[57] O. Casel, op.cit., 81.

His theory of mystery must be rejected today largely because Casel built his theory upon the groundwork of the Religionsgeschichtliche Schule, so much of which has been shown to be without a factual basis.[59] Since his theory of mystery is defective, it would be difficult to defend his conception of early Christian art as a form of the expression of mystery analogous to other explicitly sacramental forms of expression.

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[58] The fullest exposition of Casel's theory is found in his *Das Christliche Kultmysterium*, Regensburg, 1932. For a discussion of Casel's theory, cf. Th. Filthaut, *Die Kontroverse über die Mysterienlehre*, Warendorf, 1947; O. Santaga, *Dom Odo Casel, Contributo monografico per una bibliografia generale delle sue opere*, Città del Vaticano, 1966. One of the many problems in the discussion of the Mysterientheologie during the early decades of this century was the disregard for Semitic antecendents; cf. R. Brown, "The Pre-Christian Semitic Concept of Mystery," *CBQ* 20, 1958, 417-43; "The Semitic Background of the New Testament Mysterion," *Biblica* 39, 1958, 426-48; 40, 1959, 70-87.

On the other hand Casel's study of early Christian art is potentially instructive on one important point, although it is not clear how one would test this possibility against the surviving sources. As a young man Casel had developed his theory of mystery and mystery presence in opposition to what he judged to be the then prevalent, bloodless and scholastic theology of the sacraments. Casel understood art in a way similar to cult, that is as a presence, a mystery presence, which carried paradigmatic meaning for the faithful beholder.[60]

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[59] K. Prümm, Religionsgeschichtliches Handbuch, Freiburg/Rome, 1954, and by the same author, "Mystères," DBSupplément, Paris, 1960, 1-225; also, J. Hempel, "Religionsgeschichtliche Schule," RGG 5, 1957-65^3, 991-94.

[60] Casel believed that the Christian's experience of mysterion present in art as salvation paradigm (just as mysterion was present in cult as sacrament) would lead to a transformation of being. Koch and Elliger, drawing on a different set of presuppositions, believed that the transformation would occur on the level of act, hence would lead to a more moral form of life; cf. Casel's remarks critical of Elliger in JbL 10, 1930, 311.

Christian art should not be understood as simply the rationalized presentation of didactic moralisms. In fact it is not unreasonable to imagine that early Christian images, especially images executed in a cultic ambient and intended to be seen at cultic events, could have affected certain early Christians in the same way that they affected Casel. We simply do not know; there is no Christian Philostratus to tell us what images were seen or what effect such images had upon the individual beholder. But Casel's response, which sees in the image a mystery presence, is no less reasonable than is the presently fashionable moralistic response, which sees an ethical paradigm in the early Christian image, and which imagines that this is what early Christian beholders must have seen.

In 1950 the intellectual historian, Wladimir Weidlé published a brief interpretative essay on the catacomb paintings.[61] Weidlé emphasized a fact which had been known for generations but which had been periodically obscured in the study of the catacomb paintings namely, that the earliest images which occur in subterranean Rome and at Dura are relatively formless.[62] Weidlé calls this formless art "signitive," and this description has proved to be a permanent contribution to the language of art history.[63]

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[61] W. Weidlé, The Baptism of Art, Notes on the Religion of the Catacomb Paintings, London, 1950.

[62] "Form in it (early Christian art) does not express religious feeling...to put it bluntly, it is not an art at all. It is a language coined to convey thought within a religion. Such an art...is signitive." W. Weidlé, *op.cit.*,

Otherwise Weidlé's broad interpretative framework is Caselian, viz., Christianity is a genus of mystery religion, albeit transcendentalized and purified, and the Christians experienced their religion as mystery, especially in the cultic context. Weidlé portrays early Christian art as a reflection of the essential mystery character of the new religion. Since mystery finds necessary expression in cult and sacrament, Christian art is radically sacramental in its origin and in its historical unfolding. Weidlé adds to Casel's earlier article a more detailed discussion of monuments and lays greater stress on initiation soteriology as the central sacramental event

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62 con't 10,11. In his brief essay Weidle does not make note of the earliest images which accompany early Christian inscriptions. These images also could be classified appropriately as signitive. Weidle's ommission in this regard can be explained, I presume, by his desire to illustrate a baptismal theme. The formlessness of early Christian art forbids the construction of theories, like those of Dvořák, which infer a certain mental or spiritual habitus from observations on the "style" of early Christian art; M. Dvořák, *Die Anfänge der christlichen Kunst--Kunstgeschichte als Geistesgeschichte*, München, 1928 and by the same author, "Die Entstehung der christlichen Kunst," *WJbK* 2, 1923,1ff. On the relationships and correlations between image and thought, E. Kitzinger has written an instructive review of G. Ladner's *Ad Imaginem Dei: The Image of Man in Medieval Art*, Latrobe, 1965, in *Speculum* 43, 1968, 355-59.

[63] I have discussed the problem of "style" in pre-Constantinian art in chapter three below.

in the life of the early Christian.[64]

For Casel and for Weidlé the Christian image has its origins in baptism and the eucharist. The historical problem which this raises is immediately apparent: the absence of corroborative archaeological evidence. In the case of the eucharistic cult there is no pre-Constantinian evidence unless we assume that the eucharist was celebrated in the so-called assembly room of the Dura house church, in which case the evidence is negative. We have one well-known early example of the coincidence of image and initiation cult in the Dura baptistery. But there is too great a degree of similarity between the images at Dura and those in subterranean Rome to argue convincingly the baptismal cult as birth place of the image. This brings us to a second group of scholars who have postulated the funerary cult as the generating source of the earliest Christian images.

In 1878 E. Le Blant observed that certain common themes were present in early Christian epigraphy, in early Christian iconography, and in the liturgical prayers of early Christian funerary rites.[65] Le Blant traced the transmission of the petitional formula, embodied in the funerary prayer, the "ordo commendationis animae, quando infirmus est in extremis," and found this formula present in a ninth century ms. from Troyes, in the well-known Podgoritza bowl (which he dated erroneously to the fifth century), in the *Sacramentum Gelasianum* and in the *Sacramentum Gregorianum*, and in an inscription on the grave slab of Beratius Nikatoras which he took to be the embodiment of the prayer, "libera eas (animas) de ore leonis."[66] Le Blant pointed out that the funerary prayer of petition besought delivery and salvation by calling on a litany of Old and New Testament salvation paradigms, prototypes of deliverance for Christians and for Jews. Le Blant concluded that early Christian iconography had originated in a funerary context, and that the liturgical prayer of the funerary liturgy was its immediate source and inspiration.

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[64] Weidlé, op.cit., 14-21.

[65] E. Le Blant, Étude sur les sarcophages chrétiens antiques de la ville d'Arles, Paris, 1878, XXI-XXXIX; and by the same author, "Les bas reliefs des sarcophages chrétiens et les liturgies funéraires," RA 20/38, 1879, 233-41.

In an article which appeared in 1887 entitled, "Sens et origine des symboles tumulaires de l'Ancien Testament dans l'art chretien primitif," David Kaufmann expanded Le Blant's thesis by providing evidence for the Jewish origins of numerous early Christian salvation paradigms.[67]

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[66] Le Blant, *Étude...*, XXXIX and passim, cites other liturgical sources including the Mozarabic liturgy and an interesting passage from the *Chanson de Roland* which bears the imprint of the early Christian petitional prayer paradigm.

[67] D. Kaufmann, "Sens et origine des symboles tumulaires de l'Ancien-Testament dans l'art chrétien primitif," *RÉJ* 14, 1887, 33-48, 217-253.

Kaufmann observed that the majority of types which occur in the earliest Christian liturgical formularies as well as in the earliest Christian iconography derive from the Old Testament. The major part of Kaufmann's article is occupied with a survey of these types as they appear in early Christian monuments, a survey which for its day was a useful contribution to the understanding of early Christian iconography. But the most important part of Kaufmann's article lay in his demonstration of a Jewish liturgical tradition, known from Rabbinic sources, which may have served as the model for a section of the early Christian funerary liturgy and hence indirectly was the source of the cycle of salvation images executed to remind the living and the dying of the Christian meaning of death.[68]

In his Gebet und Bild in frühchristlicher Zeit, Karl Michel synthesized the earlier works of Le Blant and Kaufmann and in doing so defended the thesis that cult was the birthplace and origin of the Christian image.[69] Michel added important new source documentation to the earlier discussions of the subject, he pointed out the possible social origins of petitional prayer, and he traced the putative Jewish and syncretistic origins of this form of prayer.[70] Michel also attempted to demonstrate how the content of petitional prayer was given material form in the monuments of primitive Christianity.[71]

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[68] ibid., 243-53.

[69] K. Michel, Gebet und Bild in frühchristlicher Zeit, Leipzig, 1902.

Although Michel favored the idea that prayer no doubt preceded and was the source and inspiration of Christian image making, he was careful to respect the limitations of the sources. He readily acknowledged that it was impossible to trace a direct line of historical influence from prayer to image.[72] Michel also avoided the portrayal of petitional prayer as the sole source of inspiration for early Christian art. His object was simply to demonstrate the parallelism of themes common to prayer and image and to postulate the typological dependency of image on prayer

[70] The most important documentation which Michel adduced was the corpus of so-called pseudo Cyprianic prayers, which he gives, *ibid.*, 3-7, in German translation. For the Latin original of *Oratio I*, cf., G. Hartel, ed., *Cypriani Opera Omnia*, *CSEL* *III/III*, Vienna, 1871, 144-46; *for Oratio II*, cf., A. Von Harnack, "Drei wenig beachtete cyprianische Schriften und die Acta Pauli," *TU* N.F., IV/3b, 1899, 25-29. Against a background of exorcism and Jewish, pagan syncretism Michel associates these prayers with the Antiochene Cyprian, a magician turned Christian; cf. T. Zahn, *Cyprian von Antiochien und die deutsche Faustsage*, Erlangen, 1882. Von Harnack thinks they derive from the Gallic poet, Cyprian. Both agree that the prototype was Greek and may date as early as the second or third centuries. Michel accepts the evidence from the *Mishnah* adduced by Kaufmann, *op.cit.*, and adds to Kaufmann's penitential prayer source examples from apocalyptic Judaism and Alexandrian Jewish literature.

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[71] Michel, *op.cit.*, 48-121.

[72] *ibid.*, 32.

forms.[73]

Almost by definition subterranean funerary monuments have a better chance of survival than do monuments executed and preserved in another physical context. Hence the thesis which argues that visual imagery was engendered from a cultic source must be tested largely in terms of funerary remains. We have already noted that the only surviving non-funerary, cultic, material evidence of pre-Constantinian Christianity is found in the Dura baptistery. I do not want to minimize the importance of this monument for our understanding of early Christian art and Christian attitudes toward image making. As will be suggested below, it is important that the Dura baptistery with its complement of soteriological iconography be understood properly as a representative monument and not merely as an isolated exception in third century Christianity.[74] But even though the Dura baptistery was representative it is difficult to know precisely how representative it was. Inferences made on the basis of the Dura baptistery, especially when such inferences purport to describe the rest of pre-Constantinian Christianity, are invariably problematic.

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[73] ibid., 117 and passim.

[74] With the exception of the Dura baptistery the earliest extant Christian non funerary images which can be linked with a cult setting do not appear until the fourth century. This surely is due to the accidents of preservation. What was done at Dura was done elsewhere. The Dura baptistery is not an isolated historical phenomenon in any sense except that it happens to still exist and is known to us. Otherwise it must be construed as a representative historical monument.

Despite the survival of the Dura baptistery we are largely restricted, in the discussion of cult and image, to funerary sources. There is a further restriction: our knowledge of the religious content and the form of the earliest Christian funerary cult is limited. We know considerably less about the funerary cult than we do about the contemporary initiation cult or meal cult. This is due again to the accidents of preservation, but more importantly to the problematic status of the funerary cult which the earliest generations of Christians celebrated. Indeed early funerary rites were considered superstitious by later church authorities, were suppressed, and were then largely forgotten.[75]

An extraordinary effort by the community of scholars has gone into assembling every scrap of literary, epigraphic, and monumental evidence concerning early Christian funerary rites.[76] Due to the nature of the available sources much of this work has focussed on the cult meal celebrated periodically at the gravesite. Though in itself nothing new in the history of religions, the occurrence of a meal in an early Christian funerary context has occasioned considerable scholarly debate. We need not trace the details of that debate but need to note only that meal scenes figure prominently in the earliest Christian iconography; the interpretation of these meal scenes has fluctuated between the symbolic and the realistic. The champion of the latter interpretation has been Theodor Klauser. Klauser wrote in 1928 that Christian archaeology had been sufficiently purged of "unhealthy elements" and had progressed to the point where it was probable that all of the meal scenes which appear on early Christian monuments should be understood realistically, viz., as representations of the meal celebrated at the gravesite in honor of the deceased.[77] Klauser advanced this interpretation in opposition to the traditional Roman view which saw in representations of meal scenes either an eschatological meal or a eucharistic meal. Klauser's contribution to our understanding of the early Christian funerary meal has been very substantial indeed. At the same time it should be said that there remains to this day an area of ambiguity in the interpretation of meal scenes as they appear on early Christian monuments, and neither Klauser nor his followers have offered a definitive clarification of this ambiguity.[78]

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[75] J. Quasten, "Vetus Superstitio et Nova Religio. The Problem of the Refrigerium in the Ancient Church of North Africa," HTR 33, 1940, 253-66.

[76] To my knowledge a systematic and comprehensive bibliography of studies concerning the early Christian funerary cult has never been compiled. For the period 1915-27, cf., T. Klauser, "Das altchristliche Totenmahl nach dem heutigen Stande der Forschung," TG 20, 1928, 599,600, n.4, 5. For more recent works, cf., A.C. Rush, Death and Burial in Christian Antiquity, Washington, D.C., 1941 and A. Stuiber, Refrigerium Interim, Bonn, 1957.

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[77] "Erst neuerdings haben uns eine nüchternere, nicht auf vorgefassten Anschauungen aufbauende Arbeitsweise und die fortschreitende Aufhellung der kulturellen Hintergründe des alten Christentums ernstlich mit der Möglichkeit rechnen lassen, dass vielleicht alle erhaltenen christlichen Mahlbilder ausnahmslos Wiedergaben des Totenmahls sein wollen," T. Klauser, op.cit., 602,603. It has become increasingly clear in recent years that under "eine nüchternere, nicht auf vorgefassten Anschauungen aufbauende Arbeitsweise " Klauser understands primarily his own work and those relatively few scholars within the field of early Christian archaeology who have followed him. I have discussed Klauser's work at greater length below in chapter three.

In a recent study, which bears the impress of Klauser from beginning to end, the issue of image and funerary cult reappears, but in this case the author, A. Stuiber, rejects emphatically the possibility that cult could have generated image. Stuiber is convinced that a relationship between image and funerary cult did exist in the earliest Christian period, and he is equally sure that all previous efforts to describe the nature of this relationship were misguided.[79] But Stuiber does not offer any new solutions.

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[78] In his recent study of early Christian eschatological themes A. Stuiber, op.cit., 120-36 has adopted Klauser's suggestion and has attempted to portray all of the meal scenes on early Christian monuments as representations of the cult meal. In this effort he has met strong opposition by J.M.C. Toynbee, JThS 9/1, 1958, 141-49. Stuiber's major thesis, which concerns Jonah iconography and the state of soul after death in Hades, before the general resurrection, has evoked a number of very informative responses in addition to the review article by Professor Toynbee. The most important of these is the study of Jonah iconography by A. Ferrua, noted in chapter three below.

[79] A. Stuiber, op.cit., 167-75.

His disagreement with Le Blant and Michel is mainly source critical. He faults Michel unjustifiably for not having recognized the diversity of paradigm types and their appearance in widely differing contexts.[80] Stuiber emphasizes the well known fact that there is a greater diversity of paradigms preserved in literary form than in iconographic form, and from this he concludes that the prayer paradigms cannot have been determinative in the evolution of the image paradigms, and hence prayer paradigms cannot tell us anything about the symbolic content of image paradigms.[81] According to Stuiber both the prayer paradigms and their visual parallels must be understood as referring to the living and not to the dead.[82] Stuiber denies that there could have been a Greek original to the pseudo-Cyprianic prayers and questions their Gallic origins.[83] His most telling criticism of Michel's work concerns the question of chronology. In their present form petitional prayer formularies cannot be dated before the fifth century, and as both Le Blant and Michel were well aware, this is the major weakness in the theory that prayer preceded image and was its major source of inspiration. If source critical study could demonstrate conclusively that there was an earlier Christian form of the petitional prayer paradigm then the Le Blant/Michel theory would gain considerably greater force.[84]

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[80] A. Stuiber, _op.cit._, 171 accuses Michel of "Einengung der Betrachtung," an accusation which, considering the variety of hypothetical sources that Michel adduces, is unjustified.

[81] Stuiber, _op.cit._, 167ff.

[82] _ibid._, 170.

[83] _ibid._, 169.

3. Early Christian Art and the History of Art.

It is not our purpose to review the many art-historical studies which have appeared over the past century and which have increased the inventory of early Christian art and our understanding of this art. The subject of this study, the earliest evidences for Christian attitudes toward images and image making, requires that we deal with a diversity of early Christian artifacts and images. Despite the positive advances of art historical inquiry in other areas of history, I would emphasize here limited usefulness of art historical method for the study of Christian art prior to the fourth century.

Technically the history of art is a comparative discipline the primary concern of which is with those monuments which are considered works of art.[85] In their concentration on monuments as works of art, art historians have developed methods of stylistic analysis by which they can date and classify monuments with varying degrees of reliability and by which they can show the formal dependencies and interrelationships of monuments. In the interpretation of monuments beyond the stylistic level it is necessary for art historians to derive the content of their interpretations from disciplines outside of art history, but the first and most important task of art history proper is the formal analysis and chronological classification of the monuments themselves.[86]

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[84] According to Stuiber, *op.cit.*, 171ff., both prayer and image must have derived from earlier "Summaries;" it is not clear how, or indeed if, Stuiber dealt with von Harnack's source critical hypothesis, as stated in his *op.cit.*, and his *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius* II/2, Leipzig, 1958^{2}, 369, n.4.

Due to the absence of appropriate comparative materials, the stylistic analysis of the catacomb paintings has been largely fruitless and has led occasionally to dramatic dead ends.[87] For this reason inferences drawn on the basis of the stylistic analysis of the catacomb paintings and the various minor arts are bound to be largely subjective and unreliable. As F. Gerke has shown us in his impressive study of pre-Constantinian Christian sculpture, *Die christlichen Sarkophage der vorkonstantinischen Zeit*, Berlin, 1940, there is a somewhat firmer basis for the stylistic study and analysis of the lapidary arts of the third century. This is due in part to the nature of the medium, its greater "Werkstattgebundenheit" and hence its greater conservatism. Christian lapidary art of the third century reveals a slightly greater degree of continuity with developments outside of the Christian realm, and hence it is possible, but with severe limitations, to situate the Christian sculpture of this century within the general history of art. However, in both painting and sculpture the absence of comparative materials is a factor which inhibits even purely stylistic analysis.

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[85] A. Grabar, Christian Iconography, Princeton, N.J., 1968, xliv, xlv.

[86] E. Kitzinger, "On the Interpretation of Stylistic Changes in Late Antique Art," BR 15/3, 1967, 1-10.

[87] As in the studies of Dvořák, opa.cita. The most serious attempt to date the catacomb paintings on stylistic criteria was F. Wirth's Römische Wandmalerei, Berlin, 1934. Wirth uses the term "illusionistic style" to date the paintings of the third century, but the vagueness of this term is revealed in his consistent appeal to non-stylistic factors. For a more recent art historical study of the catacomb paintings cf. J. Kollwitz, "Die Malerei der Konstantinischen Zeit," Atti VII. CIAC, 29-158.

In the first half of this century the art-historical analysis of pre-Constantinian Christian monuments was dominated by the search for the origins of Christian art in certain regional prototypes, most notably in a hypothetical Alexandrian school. The personalities involved in this art-historical debate were primarily the Viennese art historian, Josef Strzygowski, and his American contemporary, Charles Rufus Morey, together with the students and scholars whom they influenced.[88] Strzygowski, in particular, was sensitive to the theoretical problem created by the existence of an early Christian art, and wrote extensively about the origins of early Christian art and the theological, historical complications created by this art.[89] Strzygowski, felt that the original Christian spirit in the visual arts must have been non-representational and that later historical iconoclasm should be understood as the restoration of this original non-representational attitude. Consistent with his principle that the origin of Christian art must be found in the east, Strzygowski looked for the prototypes of Christian iconography in Mazdaism, Judaism, and Islam. There is a wealth of information in Strzygowski's works, but in the matter of origins the connections which he pursued were so obscure and so lacking in source-critical documentation that they do not throw any fresh light on our subject.

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[88] A useful discussion by one of the Strzygowski circle is given by O. Wulff, "Ein Gang durch die Geschichte der altchristlichen Kunst mit ihren neuen Pfadfindern," RKW 34, 1911, 281-314; 35, 1912, 193-240; cf. F.W. von Bissing, "Kunstforschung oder Kunstwissenschaft? Eine Auseinandersetzung mit der Arbeitsweise Josef Strzygowskis," AbhMü, N.F., Heft 31, 1950. A bibliography of Morey's work (to 1949) is given in the ArtB XXXII/4, 1950, 345-49. D.V. Ainalov's The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Art, New Brunswick, N.J., 1961 (original Russian edition, St. Petersburg, 1900) belongs in this context also; cf. Editor's Preface by Cyril Mango, VII-XV, for useful comments on the art historical study of early Christian art.

[89] J. Strzygowski, Ursprung der christlichen Kirchenkunst, Leipzig, 1920, 111-131; Aufgang des Nordens, Leipzig, 1936, 5-59.

Morey's work was more strictly art-historical and less influenced by intellectual and cultural history. Morey shared Strzygowski's conviction that early Christian art was not Rome-centered but had instead originated in the east, and a considerable amount of his study was concerned with a hypothetical Alexandrian origin of early Christian art.[90] Both Strzygowski and Morey are important for having emphasized regional differences in the study of early Christian art. But their major contributions to the field lie in areas beyond the chronological scope of the present study.

4. Early Christianity and Pagan Antiquity.

Early Christianity was only one of the religions of late antiquity, and it was shaped in important ways by its religio-cultural environment. As a religious system early Christianity was composite: it borrowed from Jews and from pagans. The historical study of early Christianity is a comparative discipline; it requires an understanding of the world into which Christianity was born. These generalizations appear self evident to us today, but there was a time, not so very long ago, when such generalizations provoked considerable controversy. Among students of early Christian art and archaeology Monsignor Wilpert is a reminder to us in our own recent history of the strong counter tradition in the study of early Christianity. This tradition hoped to vindicate Christianity's dogmatic claims to uniqueness by adducing historical and material proofs. Methodologically this meant that early Christian sources, both written and monumental, were studied in isolation from their religio-cultural ambient.

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[90] C.R. Morey, "Notes on Early Christian Miniatures," Art B, XI/1, 1929, 5-103; Early Christian Art, Princeton, 1942, 37-77.

The study of early Christianity and its arts in the light of pagan antecedents, parallels, and models has a long history; as a method it cannot claim uniqueness in any sense. Clement of Alexandria viewed Christianity from this perspective; so did his contemporary, the pagan philosopher and opponent of Christianity, Celsus. Paul knew that aspects of Christian belief resembled paganism, and he was able to use this knowledge to advantage from time to time. All of the various specialties and sub-specialties within the study of Christian beginnings draw upon insights gained through the comparison of Christianity with paganism, or with Judaism.

Thus, although the study of early Christianity from the perspective of pagan antiquity does not constitute, either in method or in substance, a separate area of inquiry, still I have considered it separately here because of the scope and quality of work produced by scholars who share in this tradition. It is clear from the above mentioned examples, Clement and Celsus, that early Christianity and late antique paganism, (or Judaism) may be compared to either's benefit. It is the writer's objective that counts most. Christianity may be reduced to its borrowed parts and can be shown to be nothing more than a form of syncretism. Or Christianity may be shown to incorporate aspects of paganism (or Judaism) without a loss of its own center and integrity. The composite and borrowed character of much that is early Christian may be construed to be a strength or a weakness. Authors who write from within the community of faith regard as reductionistic the attempt to identify Christianity as merely another form of late antique eclecticism or syncretism, a hodge-podge of borrowed beliefs and forms devoid of any true center. Authors who write with convictions gained independent of the Christian community of belief often regard as naive the efforts of Christians to demonstrate the superiority of uniqueness of early Christianity when judged in the light of the then contemporary paganism.

In recent historiography the defenders of early Christianity, judged in the light of its pagan environs, have adhered more or less to the scholarly tenets advanced by the so-called *Antike und Christentum* school. This was not, as originally conceived, a school in any formal sense, but since the Second World War two research institutes have been legally incorporated as schools devoted to the study of *Antike und Christentum*. Prior to the War the most illustrious exponents of the *Antike und Christentum* approach were Franz Joseph Dölger and Arthur Darby Nock.[91] Both Dölger and Nock were interested in the continuity of religious expression between early Christianity and paganism. Unlike the proponents of Religionsgeschichte, Dölger and Nock were careful to underscore not only the points of continuity where Christianity had borrowed directly from paganism, but also the points of discontinuity, where Christianity differed from its religious predessors.

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[91] Dölger died in October 1940. In his exacting life style and in his high standard of scholarship, as evidenced in his own publications, Dölger inspired a generation of students who have continued in his tradition. This is particularly true of the work produced at the institute dedicated to his memory, the *Franz Joseph Dölger Institut*, established in Bonn in 1955. The two official publications of this institute are devoted to the study of relationships between antiquity and Christianity: *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*, 1950ff. and the *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*, 1958ff. A bibliography, compiled by Karl Baus, of Dölger's work is published in *F.J. Dölger. Leben und Werk* (hrsg. T. Klauser), Münster, 1956. The only item, known to me, which should be added to this bibliography is Dölger's "Beiträge zur Geschichte des Kreuzzeichens" published annually as the first article in the *JbAC* 1-10, 1958-67. Cf. H. Rahner, "Neue Wege der antiken Missionsgeschichte. Zum Andenken an Franz Joseph Dölger (1879-1940," *NZMW* 1, 1945, 12-23. Dölger's objective, to illuminate the continuity and discontinuity of religious experience between paganism and early Christianity, was the same objective pursued by the *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule.* But Dölger was frequently critical of this school's misrepresentations and imprecisions in the matter of source critical analysis; cf. his observations in "Mysterienwesen und Urchristentum," *TRev* 15, 1916, 385-93, 433-38. I would like to thank Professor Emeritus, Johannes Quasten of the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. for helping me to understand Dölger's work. A.D. Nock, "Early Gentile Christianity and its Hellenistic Background" and "A Note on the Resurrection," in A.E.J. Rawlinson, *Essays on the Trinity and the Incarnation*, London, 1928; "Hellenistic Mysteries and Christian Sacraments," *Mnemosyne* S. IV/V, 1952, 177-213; *Conversion*, Oxford, 1933.

Dölger's well-known, one-man periodical, Antike und Christentum, Münster, 1929-1950, comprised a wide spectrum of subject matter, all of it held together by Dölger's resolve to delineate the continuity of pagan and Christian religiosity. In the title alone, Dölger intended a corrective of such reconstructions as had been presented, for instance in Ludwig von Sybel's Christliche Antike, Marburg, 1906, 1909. Not "Christian antiquity," argued Dölger, but "antiquity and Christianity," because the two, despite their many similarities and interdependencies, are finally two different historical entities. Early Christianity was not, in Dölger's opinion, just another form of late antique paganism; it was instead a new and different religion.

The method of the Antike und Christentum school is comparative, a matter of identifying things on the basis of common resemblances and, where appropriate, of postulating filiation on the basis of typological similarity. The substantive concerns of the Antike und Christentum school have been largely focussed on the religious history of late antiquity, in particular the points of contact between Christianity and paganism.

Monuments *per se* are seldom the object of study, but more frequently they serve as one of the historical sources to be adduced. As a consequence, although many of the studies written in the spirit of the *Antike und Christentum* school draw heavily upon evidence gleaned from monumental sources, still most of the work done by this school cannot be classified in the strict sense as art history. This is true, for instance, of representative works by H. Achelis, H.W. Beyer, F.J. Dölger and his followers, H. Jordan, H. Lietzmann, G. Marangoni, F. Piper, M.D. Paoul-Rochette, F. Saxl, M. Simon, V. Schultze, and L. von Sybel.[92]

But more important than the technical classification of these studies, which tends in any event to be pedantic and arbitrary, is a critical awareness of the confusion and circularity of argument which characterizes so much of the study of early Christian art from the perspective of Antike und Christentum. Instructive in this regard is Saxl's essay on artistic expression in late paganism and early Christianity.[93] The author explicitly adopts an art-historical point of departure, i.e., the prima facie evidence is the monument from which Saxl proposes to draw inferences that have a bearing on the history of religions. But in evolving a body of stylistic definitions and analyses, Saxl borrows frequently from the history of religions, and hence the later inferences drawn ostensibly on the basis of style are misleading. In other words, if one wishes to add something new to the history of religions by way of inference from stylistic criteria, then one must avoid a confusion of the latter with evidence from another body of sources. I make this elementary observation not in the spirit of pendantry but because so much of the study of early Christian art from the perspective of Antike und Christentum fails at this point.

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[92] H. Achelis, "Altchristliche Kunst 2. Heidnische und christliche Kunst," *ZNTW* 13, 1912, 212-46, "Altchristliche Kunst 5. Die Totenmahle," *ZNTW* 17, 1916, 31-107; H.W. Beyer, "Die Eigenart der christlichen Kunst im Rahmen der Spätantike," *Von der Antike zum Christentum. Festgabe Viktor Schultze*, Stettin, 1931, 67-81; H.Jordan, "Gibt es eine altchristliche Kunst?", *Geschichtliche Studien Albert Hauck...dargebracht...*, Leipzig, 1916, 311-25; H. Lietzmann, "Die Entstehung der christlichen Kunst," *IWWKT* 5, 1911, 481-504; G. Marangoni, *Delle cose gentilesche e profano trasportate ad uso e adornamento delle chiese*, Roma, 1744; F. Piper, *Mythologie und Symbolik der christlichen Kunst*, Weimar, 1847-51; M.D. Raoul-Rochette, *Discours sur l'origine, le developement, et le caractere des types imitatifs qui constituent l'art du Christianisme*, Paris, 1834; F. Saxl, "Frühes Christentum und spätes Heidentum in ihren künstlerischen Ausdrucksformen" *WJbK* 2, 1923, 63-121; V. Schultze, *Archäologische Studien über altchrist-Monumente*, Wien, 1880; L. von Sybel, *Christliche Antike*, Marburg, 1906, 1909.

The most famous attempt to demonstrate the rootedness of early Christian art in pagan, especially Greek, prototypes is the above mentioned Christliche Antike by von

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[93] F. Saxl, op.cit.

Sybel.[94] Despite factual inaccuracies and interpretative distortions, von Sybel's work has become a minor classic in the literature of early Christian art. In essence, it is an extended survey of Christian iconography. The organization of the work is according to different iconographic themes and according to the media in which these themes occur, e.g., paint, stone, bone, wood, metal, gems, clay, with brief remarks about architecture. In his interpretation of early Christian art von Sybel drew upon the history of religions and comparative civilizations and attempted to integrate this selected material with a picture of early Christianity which shows great dependence on von Harnack. As in all iconographic studies of art executed in literate societies, von Sybel's method was a matter of applying insights gained from the study of literary sources. By profession von Sybel was a classical archaeologist and on more than one occasion he emphasized the importance of studying early Christian art from the perspective of classical archaeology. But despite this and despite his convictions concerning the primacy of monumental sources, there is very little archaeological or stylistic analysis in von Sybel's major work.[95]

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[94] Op.cit.; in addition cf. von Sybel's "Die klassische Archäologie und die altchristliche Kunst," Rektoratsrede, Marburger akademische Reden, Nummer 16, Marburg, 1906; "Das Christentum der Katakomben und Basiliken," HZ 106, 1910, 1-38; Fruhchristliche Kunst. Leitfaden ihrer Entwicklung, München, 1920; "Das Werden christlicher Kunst," RKW 39, 1916, 118ff. and 1925, 140ff., 200ff. In the first volume of his Christliche Antike, V, VI, von Sybel explained the genesis of his idea of a "Christian antiquity" which he first made known in a lecture delivered in 1877.

Von Sybel was very aware that early Christian archaeology and the study of early Christian monuments had been for generations under the control of theologians or art historians. In the preface to his second volume of Christliche Antike he confessed his desagreement with Wilpert.[96] Von Sybel's major interpretative objective was to integrate the early Christian religion and its arts into the framework of ancient history, in particular, late antiquity. For von Sybel there could be no opposition between early Christianity and antiquity, nor was it correct, in his opinion, to derive Christianity as a lineal descendant from antiquity. Instead Christianity and antiquity are to be understood as one and the same historical reality, Christianity becoming thereby an aspect of antiquity, the end of the development of ancient history, and the epigone in a once distinguished family. The early Christian religion is simply the last and dying phase of the religious history of antiquity and so also, the arts of early Christianity are the final stage and decline of the aesthetic history of the ancient world.[97]

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[95] Von Sybel ordered the materials of early Christian archaeology around the theme of comparative eschatology, op.cit. I, 38-80. For an archaeologist he showed little concern for such traditional problems as chronology, conditions of discovery and provenience of artifacts, or for excavation reports, etc. For von Sybel the Christian answer to death is ancient man's final solution to the problem of mortality, and all of early Christian art, which is "Jenseitskunst," celebrates this solution.

[96] Christliche Antike I, 9ff., and ibid. II, III, IV.

Von Sybel's effort to construe early Christianity and its arts as an integral and continuous phase of the history of antiquity has proved misleading. Early Christianity was more than just the summation of late antique syncretism. Just as von Sybel's portrayal of the religious character of early Christianity was mistaken so also his portrayal of early Christian art. Opposition to von Sybel on this point came at the beginning of this century from F. Wickhoff and A. Riegl.[98] Riegl initiated the discussion of the putative autonomy of late antique art forms, and this discussion has continued into the present.[99] There is general agreement today that early Christian art, together with the other non-Christian arts of late antiquity, represent more than just the decay of classical art. But there is considerably less agreement about the particular stylistic idiosyncracies of late antique art which permit it to be distinguished from its classical forebears.

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[97] Cf. Die klassische Archäologie und..., 9-12. "Wir (archaeologists) betrachten die altchristliche Kunst nicht als die Vorstufe der allgemeinen christlichen...Kunst... für den Archäologen ist sie (early Christian art) das Ende einer Entwicklung...das Ende und Ziel nämlich der Entwicklung und des ganzen Verlaufs der antiken Kunst.", Christliche Antike I, 9. "Innerhalb der gesamten Antike gibt es Kunst heidnischer und solche christlicher Religion, es gibt heidnische Antike und christliche Antike. In der christlichen Kunst vollendet die Antike ihren Lauf, vollzieht sich ihr letztes Schicksal...es (early Christian art) ist nicht quellende Jugendkraft, sodern absterbendes Greisentum.", ibid., 10. "Die altchristliche Religion, (instead of frühchristliche Religion) ihr Eintreten in die Welt und ihr Leben wahrend des ersten Halbjahrtausends, will auch nicht als Anfangsglied einer neuen Entwicklungsreihe betrachtet sein, sondern als Endglied einer ablaufenden, als das Schlusskapitel der Religionsgeschichte des Altertums.", ibid., 11.

[98] F. Wickhoff, Römische Kunst, Berlin, 1912 and A. Riegl, Die spätrömische Kunstindustrie nach den Funden in Österreich-Ungarn, Wien, 1901; cf. the informative review of Riegl's work by E. Panofsky, "Der Begriff des Kunstwollens," ZAAK 14, 1919, 321-29. Wickhoff and Riegl were among the first to stress that late antique art was more than just a decay of classical art, that it possessed its own internal stylistic autonomy, and that it represented a creative new point in the comparative history of forms.

The study of early Christianity in the light of pagan prototypes and parallels has had two important consequences for the present study. The first of these concerns iconography. Thanks to numerous studies in comparative iconography we now know that many if not most of the early Christian iconographic forms were derived, apparently directly, from pagan models. The most famous of these are the derivation of the Christian orans figure from pagan pietas personifications and the derivation of the reclining Jonah from Endymion representations, but there are many more.[100]

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[99] H. Lietzmann, "Das Problem der Spätantike," SBBerl, 1927, 342-58; G. Rodenwaldt, "Zur Begrenzung und Gliederung der Spätantike," JdI 59/60, 1944/45, 81-87.

[100] I have mentioned the other derivations below in chapter three. Von Sybel wrote in his Christliche Antike I, 10, "Wo heute zu irgend einem christlichen (iconographic) Typ heidnische Analoga nicht nachweisbar sind, kann sich das Fehlende jeden Tag durch Fund oder Ausgrabung ergänzen.", and although this is an overstatement, basically it has proved to be correct. Cf. A. Grabar, Christian Iconography, Princeton, N.J., 1968.

In this particular realm of image making, namely in the search for appropriate visual models to express a particular subject matter, at least some Christians were initially open to paganism.

Secondly, the study of pagan literary sources has opened up still a further dependence of Christianity upon paganism. It is well known that there was strong pre-Christian opposition to image-making and image veneration in certain pagan circles, although the extent and effect of this opposition is still unclear. Much of the early Christian opposition to images, as represented in the testimonies assembled by Koch and Elliger, reveals striking formal simililarity to pronouncements by pagan authors. The consequence of this must be stated in the form of a question for the present: in what degree was early Christian opposition to visual arts and images, as expressed in literary form, a continuation and imitation of *exempla* culled from pagan literature, and in what degree was this opposition inspired by specifically Christian considerations?[101]

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[101] E.R. Bevan, *Holy Images*, London, 1940; C. Clerc, *Les théories relatives aux cultes des images chez les auteurs grecs du IIme siècle après J.C.*, Paris, 1915; J. Geffcken, *Zwei Griechische Apologeten*, Leipzig, 1907, XVIff., and "Der Bilderstreit des heidnischen Altertums," *ARW* 19, 1919, 286-315; K. Latte, *Römische Religionsgeschichte*, München, 1967²; T. Pekary, "Der Römische Bilderstreit," *FS* 3, 1969, 13-26; On the use of *exempla* in the rhetorical schools of late antiquity cf. Hélène Pétré, *L'Exemplum chez Tertullien* (en dépôt chez l'auteur, 24, Boulevard Victor-Hugo, Neuilly-sur-Seine, 1940).

5. Early Christian Art and Judaism.

When I first began this study it was my intention to devote a separate chapter to the question of Jewish influences on early Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images. But it became increasingly clear to me that it would be, practically speaking, impossible to realize this intention within the limits of the present study. For, in order to make an intelligent assessment of the extent and character of the influence which Judaism exerted on Christianity in this matter it would be necessary first to set forth the essential features of Judaism relative to the subject of visual arts and images. But this is not my purpose, nor is it within my competence, to provide the desired synthesis of results obtained from Jewish archaeology and Jewish literature.

That there is great interest in the study of Jewish monuments and Jewish arts in antiquity is easily demonstrated by the rapidly growing literature on this subject. Israeli archaeologists, Europeans and Americans have expended great efforts in recent years to recover the material cultures of Palestine and later Judaism in the dispersion.[102] Unfortunately for our purposes, the difficult task of digesting the details of this archaeological activity and reconstructing thereby a synthetic history has not yet been undertaken. Hence, for the non-specialist, like myself, who is not continuously occupied with the archaeology and literature of Israel and ancient Judaism, it would be a hazardous undertaking at best to attempt to summarize the results of primary investigations in this area as they relate to early Christianity.

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[102] Annual summaries of archaeological activities in Israel are reported in Christian News from Israel 1, 1950ff. (reports by J. Leibovitch, M. Avi-Yonah, A. Biran). The RB and IEJ also carry annual accounts (not comprehensive) of archaeological work done relative to ancient Judaism.

A critical history of Jewish monuments in antiquity, both in Palestine and in the *diaspora*, is a major *desideratum* in the study of ancient Judaism. Together with the consideration of the surviving monuments, which for the early period of Israel's history are scarce, a critical historical survey of Jewish arts should consider monuments which are not preserved materially but which are known to us from written sources.[103] Monuments reflect the practices of a given culture or of some constituency within that culture, and hence, with variable limitations, it is possible to infer the regnant opinions or attitudes which made possible such monuments in the first place. The continuous history of Jewish monuments would thus reflect, to a degree, the vicissitudes of Jewish opinions and Jewish attitudes in the matter of figured arts and images. Whether monuments alone could reflect accurately the scope of Jewish opinions and Jewish attitudes on this subject at any given stage in the history of Israel is of course another question. But it would not occur to anyone to write a history of Jewish monuments in antiquity without considering concurrently the literary heritage of Israel and later Judaism relative to this subject. Again however we encounter a lacuna: not only is there no critical history of Jewish monuments in antiquity, but there is also no comprehensive treatment of the written statements contained in the Jewish literature of antiquity concerning the status of visual arts. Individual articles and monographs treating isolated aspects of the problem have appeared, but there is still no synthesis which would consider all of the evidence from all of the periods of Jewish history in antiquity.[104]

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[103] A brief but very valuable sketch of the history of Jewish monuments in antiquity is given by T. Klauser, "Der Beitrag der orientalischen Religionen insbesondere des Christentums zur spätantiken und Frühmittelalterlichen Kunst," *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul Tema: Tardo Antico e Alto Medioevo (Roma 4-7 Aprile, 1967), Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei*, Anno 365, Roma 1968, 33-59 ("Die Israelitisch-Jüdische Kunst") Klauser's study provides the outline for a more extensive study of Jewish art in antiquity. He includes a discussion of literary remains from which it is possible to reconstruct, to a degree, lost monuments. For the period of the monarchy the most important monuments were those created by Solomon, his palace and his temple, as described in the first book of Kings; on this cf. the extensive study by Th. A. Busink, *Der Tempel von Jerusalem von Salamo bis Herodes, Bd. I, Der Tempel Salamos*, Leiden, 1970. For further studies of Jewish art in antiquity cf. B. Kanael, *Die Kunst der Antiken Synagoge*, Munich/Frankfurt, 1961, 114ff.

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[104] G. von Rad, Theologie des alten Testaments I, Munich, 1957, 211-218. Von Rad presents a useful summary but does not explain to his reader his criteria for classifying

In the absence of a reliable synthesis which would treat concurrently the written and material evidence for Jewish attitudes toward the visual arts it is best to proceed with caution in the analysis of Jewish influences on early Christianity. At the same time, at least one fundamental observation is appropriate here: the meaning of the Mosaic injunction against the making of a pesel must be understood first with reference to its original context, namely the (partial) disclosure of Yahweh's identity in the wilderness theophany of Exodus 19/9ff. In this account there is no denial that Yahweh possesses a visible aspect, but the form of the theophany expressly excludes the revelation of that aspect. The wilderness experience very soon became a normative feature of Yahwism: Yahweh cannot (and should not) be represented in visual form.[105]

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104 con't materials. Contrary to numerous other commentators on the subject, von Rad makes the Shechemite Dodecalogue the oldest form of the commandment prohibiting images, Deut. 27/15. On this cf. M. Noth, Exodus (trans. J.S. Bowden), London, 1959, 169ff.; K.H. Bernhardt, Gott und Bild, Berlin, 1956, 87ff., 110ff.; M. Buber, Moses, Oxford, 1946, 126ff.; J.J. Stamm, "Dreissig Jahre Dekalogforschung," TRu 27, 1961, 226-234. Stamm, reflects the prevailing opinion namely that Exod. 20/4a represents the most ancient form of the commandment against image making. In any event it would be necessary to establish the literary history of the forms (and variants) in which the second commandment appears before the influence of this commandment on Christianity could be properly assessed.

[105] On the essential unity of commandments one and two cf. W. Zimmerli, "Das Zweite Gebot," Festschrift A. Bertholet, Tübingen, 1950, 550-63. Images of Yahweh are known from the examples of Micha the Ephraimite who caused an image (probably) of Yahweh to be made from silver which had been consecrated to him, Judges 17, 18, from Jeroboam I Kings

The ark became symbolic of the essential incompatibility between Yahweh and the visual image of him. Certainly there are moments in the history of Israel when the art functioned as the virtual power and person of Yahweh, but more often the ark was construed to be the occasion of Yahweh's presence rather than the fulness of his person.[106] The kernel of Israel's attitude toward the making of a visual image must be understood first with reference to the making of an image of Yahweh. Israel's experience in the wilderness forbade this, and this primal experience and its implications passed over somewhat vicariously into Christianity.

Secondarily the scope of the Mosaic injunction was extended to apply to images and visual forms other than those of Yahweh. This is however a secondary and variable implication of Mosaic injuction, not a necessary consequence.

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105 con't 12/28ff., and from the Israelites with their golden calf, *Exod*. 32/1ff. W. F. Albright, *From Stone Age to Christianity*, Baltimore, 1946, 202, 203. According to the evidence provided by G.H. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, Philadelphia, Pa., 1962^2, 117ff., no images of male deities which could be construed as images of Yahweh have been found at Israelite sites prior to the exile. At these same sites there is however an abundance of female figures, bespeaking in Wright's opinion evidence of "common people... unenlightened or tolerant circles in Israel."

[106] Yahweh and the ark are referred to interchangeably in Numbers 10/35-36. One commentator sees the ark as "an extension of Yahweh's personality," cf. G.H. Davies, *IDB* I, 223 (further bibliography, 226). K.H. Bernhardt, *op. cit*., 144ff.; Th. A. Busink, *op.cit.*, 276ff.

Periodically both in the history of Judaism and in the history of Christianity the repudiation of images of Yahweh, contained in the apodicticism of Exodus 20/4a, was expanded to prohibit the making of the temunah of anything in heaven or on earth beneath or in the waters under the earth, as expressed in Exodus 20/4b. When the repudiation of a particular class of images (in this case images of Yahweh) is extended to embrace the prohibition of all pictorial imagery, regardless of its iconographic content, then we are faced with the rigoristic interpretation and expansion of a primitive law. Occasionally rigorism was deemed necessary, both in the history of Judaism in antiquity and in early Christian history. But rigorism was not a continuously normative attitude for either religion.[107]

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[107] It would be a very useful addition to our knowledge of ancient Judaism to know in detail the historical circumstances which give rise to the introduction of rigoristic attitudes and practices. Until further evidence proves to the contrary, I assume that rigoristic attitudes usually accompany a reform mentality. Examples that are well known include the reform under Josiah in the seventh century B.C.E., at which time Exod. 20/4b was introduced and the age of the Tannaim at which time rigoristic rabbis were conspicuous; on this subject cf. chapter two below, 9ff., n. 102. Josephus' rigoristic criticism of Solomon is discussed in C. Roth, "An Ordinance Against Images in Jerusalem A.D. 66," HTR 49, 1956, 169ff. On Josephus and Philo cf. J. Gutmann, "The 'Second Commandment' and the Image in Judaism," HUCA 32, 1961, 161ff. An extremely important contribution to our understanding of non-rigoristic rabbinic Judaism, written expressly to counter Goodenough's picture of heterodox Judaism, is E.E. Urbach's, "The Rabbinical Laws of Idolatry in the Light of Archaeological and Historical Facts," IEJ 9, 1959, 149ff, 229ff. Urbach shows that it is an oversimplification of

To be sure, there was inherent within ancient Judaism what we might call an iconophobic _Tendenz_. This inclination or tendency was nurtured by the primal Israelite experience of the highest reality, Yahweh, whose visible aspect the Israelites were not allowed to see. To a certain degree this _Tendenz_ passed over into Christianity and was given expression by individual Christian writers and by larger factions within Christianity.[108] But the older view of ancient Judaism which saw in it a homogeneous religion, in theory iconophobic and in practice aniconic, cannot be supported today. Consequently the view of early Christianity which argued that it simply inherited Israel's rigorism requires revision.

In matters pertaining to visual art and visual imagery there are essentially two areas in which Jewish influence on early Christianity may be detected. The first of these concerns the already mentioned Christian adoption and

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107 con't the sources to portray rabbis of the first and second centuries, C.E., as homogeneously rigoristic in the matter of images and image making. Urged by the economic necessities of their constituents some rabbis were able to interpret the law in a latitudinarian manner even to the point of finding justification for Jews to fabricate images of pagan divinities.

[108] But how representative was the tendency within Christianity to depreciate all visual imagery? And how representative was rigorism within early Christianity? I have tried to suggest solutions to these difficult questions in chapter four.

adaptation of the Mosaic injunction against the making of a pesel, while the second area of influence concerns the origins and formation of the earliest Christian repertory of pictorial images. Regarding the former it will be possible in some instances to establish the filiation of a Christian attitude directly from Jewish precedent. In other cases the Jewish influence will not be so self-evident, because opposition to the making of images of the deity (or deities) and opposition to image worship associated with these images were features of enlightened paganism in antiquity as well as of Judaism. Failure to make proper note of this fact has led commentators to prejudge sources and to identify "typically Jewish" preoccupations in documents which, demonstrably, have no necessary connections with Judaism. This will be seen for instance in the forthcoming study of the fourth and seventh epistles of Pseudo-Heraclitus, where it will be argued that the unknown epistolographer, writing in the first or second centures of the present era, need not have been a Jew. The parallels from pagan literature in this instance are compelling and urge the deletion of these epistles from the traditional corpus of Jewish Hellenistic literature.

The second area of Jewish influence on early Christianity concerns the putative Jewish origins of early Christian art. If it could be clearly established that

Christian image-making was preceded by a tradition of Jewish image-making and that this Jewish tradition was the effective inspiration and source of the early Christian repertory of visual images, then this determination would affect radically the traditional picture of early Christian attitudes toward visual images. At present however the state of this question is confused and uncertain. My purpose here is only to outline in broad terms some of the many problems which arise when this theory of origins is tested. On the face of it the Jewish hypothesis possesses a certain a priori probability. Once it has been established that certain Jews in antiquity did make pictorial images illustrating aspects of their belief and their history (a fact which no one could intelligently deny at this stage in our knowledge of ancient Judaism[109]), then the proposition that Christians, at least those Christians who were converts from Judaism or who were otherwise subject to Jewish influences, would have inherited the Jewish tradition of image making acquires inherent probability. However, while the theory of Jewish influence on Christianity in the formation of the early Christian repertory of pictorial imagery is attractive, it is also in practice a theory which is elusive and which resists verification largely because of the uncertainties of the sources.

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[109] By comparison with Greek and Roman standards the corpus of Jewish figured arts in antiquity is modest. The iconography of this art consists largely of inanimate objects, animals, plants and decorative motifs. Anthropomorphic representation does appear however in a modest degree. The most famous example of this is the Dura synagogue. Otherwise examples are known from floor mosaics, gems, lamps, graffiti and wall carvings (as at Beth She'arim). On the probability that the cherubim in Solomon's temple were anthropomorphic figures, cf. Th.A. Busink, op.cit., 267-72, 285, 286.

In setting forth evidence to substantiate the claim that Jewish art precedes and is the source and external origin of early Christian art, proponents of the Jewish hypothesis have adduced a wide diversity of source materials. One group of these materials contains certain symbolic images thought by some to be the product of an idiosyncratic Jewish or Semitic form of Christianity. In general the claims made in the name of these sources do not inspire confidence, and hence we will consider the Jewish Christian thesis only briefly here. It is not inconceivable that the material remains of Jewish Christianity could be adduced as evidence for the dependence of Christian art on Jewish models. In the discussion of Jewish Christianity and its material remains this aspect of the subject has not been treated, but it is a logical inference which may be defended once certain prior contingencies have been established.

The oldest form of Christianity was Jewish and of Aramaic speech. This form of Christianity, later looked back upon by Gentile Christians as heterodox especially in Christology, evolved in some places as a separate entity.

Some scholars believe that this Jewish or Aramaic Christianity expressed itself from the beginning in ideas and beliefs which were idiosyncratic to Semitic religion alone. Others deny this, and emphasize, especially for the period of Christian beginnings, the exchange and interrelationship of ideas and beliefs between Greco-Romans and Semites.[110] Among those scholars who would stress that this earliest form of Christianity was distinctly Semitic, free of Greco-Roman influences, a few have argued that the characteristically Semitic quality of this religion can be demonstrated not only from written sources (which they define variously) but also from material remains.[111]

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[110] The literature of the subject of Jewish Christianity is extensive. The older works of the nineteenth and early twentieth centures are discussed in H.J. Schoeps', *Theologie und Geschichte des Judenchristentums*, Tübingen, 1949, 1ff. The peculiarities of Schoeps' own definition of Jewish Christianity were discussed by M. Simon, *Verus Israel*, Paris, 1964^2, 503-508 (Postscriptum). J. Daniélou's recent effort to write a new chapter in the history of doctrine(and thereby fill in the post-apostolic period with an'orthodox' Jewish Christianity) has met with considerable criticism; cf. Daniélou's *Histoire des Doctrines Chrétiennes avant Nicée. Theologie du Judéo-Christianisme*, Tournai, 1958 and Simon, *op.cit.*, 508-512. Also by Daniélou, "Das Judenchristentum und die Anfänge der Kirche," *Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Forschung des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen, Geisteswissenschaften*, Heft 121, Köln/Opladen,1964, with criticisms by B. Kötting, W. Schneemelcher, K.H. Rengstorf, W. Caskel, and M. Noth (who rejects correctly the concept of a separate "Aramaic" Christianity, a separate Aramaic culture, and a separate Aramaic "geistige Welt.")

[111] A useful bibliography of works from the years 1950-1967 relating to the material remains of Jewish Christianity is contained in I. Mancini, *Le scoperte archeologiche sui Giudeo-Christiani*, Assisi, 1968, 11-18. For the years 1938-1953 cf.

A sizeable percentage of these material remains are believed to consist of visual signs and symbols and other symbolic objects, which express directly certain characteristic Jewish Christian beliefs and aspirations. If, for the moment, we grant the historical existence of such a distinct and separate form of early Christianity, and if we grant that the signs and symbols in question can in fact be linked with this earliest form of Christianity, then numerous important consequences would follow. The material remains in question predate by several decades what are traditionally regarded to be the oldest material remains of Christianity. Many of these symbolic, supposedly Jewish Christian objects contain iconographic features which are known in the later history of Christian art. The most important example of this is the cross which figures prominently in the discussion of the material remains of Jewish Christianity.[112] If the dating of the objects in question is accurate, and if it is correct that the symbols in question are Christian, devised and executed, that is, by Christians who saw fit to express aspects of their belief in forms which

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111 con't the "Literaturbericht" by E. Dinkler, TRu 21, 1953, 320ff., and by the same author "Zur Geschichte des Kreuzsymbols," ZTK 48, 1951, 148-72; "Kreuzzeichen und Kreuz--Tav, Chi und Stauros," JbAC 5, 1962, 93-112; "Älteste christliche Denkmäler--Bestand und Chronologie," publ. in Signum Crucis, Aufsätze...., Tübingen, 1967, 174-178.

[112] E. Dinkler, opa.cta.

were borrowed from Judaism, then it follows that Jewish imagery is an important direct source of early Christian art. Unfortunately none of this has been proved.

The major complication concerns the problematic identity of the phenomenon itself: Jewish Christianity. What was Jewish Christianity? How is it defined, and what sources are adduced to support the given definition? In the interest of defining the continuity of doctrinal development, J. Daniélou has written what he regards to be the theology of orthodox Jewish Christianity.[113] H.J. Schoeps on the other hand has focussed on what he regards to have been heterodox Jewish Christianity and has tried to write its history and theology.[114] Criticism has come from all sides and there is little or no agreement on basic issues.[115]

One fact has become increasingly clear: Judaism during the second temple period had a complex spiritual and social history. The divisions within Judaism, its varieties of belief and practice were numerous.[116] It would be therefore natural to expect that Jewish Christianity would reflect the conditions of spiritual and social diversity which characterized the parent religion. We are very poorly informed about the "hard facts" of Jewish Christian history during the early years of the new religion. Therefore it is all the more important to specify as clearly as possible what form of Jewish Christianity is intended when the term is used.

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[113] J. Daniélou, opa.cta.

[114] H.J. Schoeps. op.cit.

[115] M. Simon, op.cit., 277-314, 503-512.

[116] M. Simon, op.cit., 277ff.

If this clarity has been lacking in the discussion of the written bases for the use of the term, Jewish Christian, it has been almost completely absent in the discussion of the archaeological and material sources used to corroborate the existence of "Jewish Christianity." Since so little written history of Jewish Christianity has been preserved, archaeology is potentially a useful tool in helping to recover the community life and circumstances of Christians who had been Jews. Cardinal Daniélou, for one, was quick to perceive the usefulness of archaeology in helping him to define and identify the material cultures which produced the theology that he regards to have been Jewish Christian.[117] But it must be said that it is not to Daniélou's credit to have found confirmation to his theories in E. Testa's _Il simbolismo dei Giudei Christiani_, Jerusalem, 1962. The essential validity of Daniélou's new chapter in the history of Christian doctrine has been questioned repeatedly. His endorsement of Testa's work does not clarify the matter in the least but, if anything, casts further doubts on the real existence of a Jewish Christian theology, as defined by

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[117] J. Daniélou, _Les symboles chrétiens primitifs_, Paris, 1961.

Daniélou. In his desire to vindicate his Jewish Christian theology with material proofs, Daniélou has shown little critical regard for the reliability of archaeological sources adduced by Testa and others.

No one, to my knowledge, has been able to identify with certainty any Christian material remains which date prior to the late second or early third centuries, apart from one or two Christian papyri. The symbolic images which have been called the product of Jewish Christianity could be Christian, but they could also be Jewish. Since they are found in burial places which are demonstrably Jewish the latter possibility is all the more likely. The mere presence of a cross on an ossuary proves nothing unless it is supported by contextual evidence, and such evidence has been conspicuous by its absence. In order to prove the existence of Jewish Christian symbols it would be necessary to identify a site at which there had been an unambiguous Christian occupation prior to the early third century. If such a site were to yield material remains from the first or second centuries and if among these remains there were symbolic images, like the cross, then the identification of the religious content of the symbol in question would become a matter of probabilities inferred from the character of the site and not vice versa. There has been little or no regard for this essential point of method among the excavators of supposedly Jewish Christian material remains.

For the western half of the empire it has been suggested that material evidence of an early Jewish Christian presence can be detected at Pompei, Herculaneum, Rome, Cologne, and, most recently, Cimitile (near Nola). The Pompei hypothesis has found supporters ever since the investigations of A. Mau over a century ago. In this century the distinguished excavator of Pompei, M. della Corte and the Roman epigraphist, M. Guarducci, have supported the Jewish Christian interpretation of certain written and symbolic _graffiti_ and _dipintos_. All of this material has been conveniently summarized and the Jewish Christian interpretation of it defended in A. Baldi's popular monograph, _La Pompei Guidaico Christiana_, Cava dei Tirreni, 1964.

But for the critical assessment of the Pompei materials together with the other earliest surviving Christian material remains (outside of Rome) one must turn to E. Dinkler's essay, "Älteste christliche Denkmäler--Bestand und Chronologie." Dinkler's results agree substantially with those of A.M. Schneider: there are no surviving material evidences of Christianity (excluding papyri) which can be dated prior to ca. A.D. 200.[118] Dinkler's treatment of archaeological materials from the eastern half of the empire (which he expressly defines as part of his subject) is inadequate, and his own brand of evangelical fideism and skepticism colors the proper appreciation of monuments as an important testimony to the life of the early church, but despite this his conclusions, especially regarding chronology, must be taken as essentially correct.[119]

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[118] E. Dinkler, _op.cit_. The article by Schneider, which surveys the earliest Christian material remains found in Rome, is cited below in chapter three.

The status of supposedly Jewish Christian material remains from the eastern half of the empire, especially from Palestine, is considerably more complex and ambiguous. Numerous monographs and articles on the subject have appeared in recent years. Much of the primary investigation has been conducted by the Italian residents of the Franciscan House of Studies at the Flagellation in Jerusalem. A major role in the discovery of artifacts and in the dissemination of information relative to Jewish Christianity has been played by the Flagellation's senior archaeologist, B. Bagatti.[120]

Writing in 1953 about an Aramaic inscription which he judged to be Jewish Christian, J.T. Milik outlined the geographical extent of Palestinian, Aramaic speaking, Jewish Christianity (Scythopolis to the north, Elousa-el-Halasa to the south, to the north east Djerash in Transjordan, to the south east Bethlehem and Eleutheropolis).[121] Within this general geographical area certain sites, and certain objects found at these sites, have acquired exceptional importance for determining the character of Jewish Christianity:

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[119] Dinkler points out to his reader that the theology of the crucifixion precedes the theology of the resurrection, that the Christian word precedes the Christian thing, and that artifacts are not necessary to insure the inner continuity of church history (the word will suffice). Not all early Christians shared Dinkler's point of view. Among the early travelers to Palestine who went to see the things associated with Christ and the apostolic tradition were Melito of Sardis, HE 4/26/12, Alexander of Cappodocia HE 6/11/12, and Origen, Commentary of John 6/24 (GCS 4, 149); cf. H. Windisch, "Die ältesten christlichen Palästinapilger," ZDPV 48, 1925, 145ff.

[120] A bibliography of Bagatti's major works is contained in I. Mancini, op.cit., 11-13.

1. Mount of Olives (actually the south eastern summit known as the Mount of Offence where Solomon worshipped false gods, II *Kings* 23/13) yielding in the nineteenth century what were regarded by some to be Jewish Christian ossuaries, studied then by C. Clermont-Ganneau, and continually reexamined since then. The criteria for the Jewish Christian identification are derived from the onomastic study of ancient Jerusalem and from iconographic study of later (Constantinian) Christian symbolism.[122]

2. Kidron Valley, a group of ossuaries, found here in 1941 by E. Sukenik and N. Avigad, belongs in antiquity to a Jewish family from Cyrenaica; it is conjectured "that

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[121] J.T. Milik, "Une inscription et une lettre en Araméen Christo-Palestinien," *RB* 60, 1953, 537, 538.

[122] Bibliography given in J. Finegan, *The Archaeology of the New Testament*, Princeton, 1969, 239, 240.

the tomb in question belongs to the family of him who helped Jesus carry the cross."[123]

3. *Talpioth* (suburb of Jerusalem), another group of ossuaries, found here in 1945 by E. Sukenik, was thought by him, and others, to contain the bones of Jesus and other members of Jesus' family.[124]

4. *Mount of Olives*, another group of ossuaries from an ancient cemetery excavated in 1953 and following years by B. Bagatti and other Franciscans of the Flagellation in Jerusalem; the site, which is approximately half way down the direct descent on the west side from the summit of the Mount of Olives, is known as "Dominus flevit" and is identified trationally as the place where Jesus wept over Jerusalem before his entry into the city, *Lk*. 19/41. The ossuaries in question are thought by some to contain Christian names and symbols (especially the cross).[125]

5. *Khirbet El 'Ajn and Beit Nattif*, Christian lamps and

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[123] N. Avigad, "A Depository of Inscribed Ossuaries in the Kidron Valley, *IEJ* 12, 1962, 1-12, quoted from Avigad, p.12.

[124] E.L. Sukenik, "The Earliest Record of Christianity," *AJA* 51, 1947, 351-65; E. Dinkler, "Zur Geschichte...", *art. cit.*; D. Fishwick, "The Talpioth Ossuaries Again," *NTS* 10, 1963-64, 49-61 (chronology of inscriptions from the Roman catacombs of Lucina and Priscilla is erroneous, p.52).

[125] P.B. Bagatti, J.T. Milik, *Gli scavi del "Dominus Flevit" I*, Jerusalem 1958; E. Dinkler, "Älteste christliche....," *art.cit.*, 143, n.35, 157; R. de Vaux, *RB* 66, 1959, points out that the onomastic argument is not convincing; these supposedly Christian names could be Jewish.

other pre-Constantinian, Jewish Christian remains are reported by B. Bagatti.[126]

6. Nazareth, The Church of the Annunciation and the Church of St. Joseph (also referred to occasionally as the Chiesa della Nutrizione); sacred, mystical grottoes containing Jewish Christian graffiti are reported by B. Bagatti, uncovered beneath the pavements of the Byzantine churches during excavations conducted in 1955.[127]

7. Khirbet Kilkish (near Hebron), a large group of small stone statuaries and artifacts, acquired in 1960 and at odd intervals since then by P.A. Spijkerman and B. Bagatti for the museum of the Flagellation. The objects in question which are covered with esoteric writing and apparently cosmic symbols are believed to have belonged to the fourth century Jewish Christian sect known as the Archontites, known primarily from the fortieth chapter of Epiphanius' Panarion. The founder of the Archontites, Peter the ascetic, is reported to have spent the last years of his life three miles southwest of Hebron at Kafarbarik. These stone artifacts constitute

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[126] B. Bagatti, "Resti cristiani in Palestina anteriori a Constantino?", RivAC 26, 1950, 112-131.

[127] E. Testa, Nazaret Giudeo Cristiana, Jerusalem, 1969.

an important body of evidence for Testa's theories as expounded in Il simbolismo..., and in various of his other writings.[128]

8. Bethphage, tombs reported by P. Orfali and E. Sukenik, discussed by E. Testa, Il simbolismo..., 211-229, contain ossuaries with graffiti which are thought to derive from a Jewish Christian millenarian sect.[129]

Numerous other places and artifacts are believed to reflect the early presence of Jewish Christianity. The evidence provided by M. Guarducci for Rome is well known.[130] Bagatti's search for the ecclesia ex circumcisione has led him to western Turkey where he has found traces of the early Jewish Christian communities mentioned in the Book of Revelation.[131] On a small, supposedly first century silver plate (lamella) E. Testa has interpreted its Aramaic inscription to prove "que dès le Ier siècle, les chrétiens avaient recours à l'onction des informes, comme à un sacrement ayant pour effet de remettre les péchés."[132] Even less likely, in fact positively incredible, is Bagatti's thesis that secondary burial in ossuary form is a Christian invention. If there were the slightest evidence that this could be true then this would have obvious consequences for the growing corpus of so-called Jewish Christian ossuaries. In Testa's Il simbolismo... secondary burial in ossuary form becomes "l'espressione della nuova fede cristiana nella resurrezione della carne e nella communione dei Santi, e percio un uso cristiano."[133]

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[128] B. Bagatti, "Al centro degli Arcontici, Khirbet Kilkisc presso Hebron," La Terra Santa 40, 1964, 264-69; L. Randellini, La chiesa dei Giudeo-Christiani, Brescia, 1968, 22; J. Milik, Biblica 47, 1966, 283, n. 3; R. le Deaut, "La symbolique judeo-chrétienne," Biblica 47, 1966, 283-89; E. Dinkler, "Kreuzzeichen und Kreuz," art. cit., 108, 109; H. ch. Puech, "Archontiker," RlAC I, 1950, 633ff.

[129] E. Testa, P.S. Saller, The Archaeological Setting of the Shrine of Bethphage, Jerusalem, 1961.

[130] M. Guarducci, I graffiti sotto la confessione di S. Pietro, Rome, 1958; J.M. Toynbee , The Dublin Review 481, 1959, 234-44; A. Ferrua, RivAC 35, 1959, 231-47; E. Dinkler, TRu N.F. 27, 1961, 50-52.

[131] L. Randellini, op.cit., 14, n. 11.

To date, the existence of Jewish Christian material remains, datable to the first or second centuries, is problematic. No comprehensive and critical survey of this material has yet appeared. Much, if not most of the material remains which are identified as Jewish Christian, consist of ambiguous inscriptions and graffiti, and even more ambiguous symbols. Most of this material is of uncertain date, and in some cases, of uncertain authenticity. Therefore, for the present it is not possible to maintain that aspects of later Christian iconography (e.g. the cross) clearly passed over into Christian usage from Judaism via Jewish Christianity.

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[132] E. Testa, L'Huile de la Foi (trans. and adapted by O. Englebert), Jerusalem, 1967, 117. Testa's discovery contradicts what is known from other sources about the historical development of the sacrament of last anointing; cf. B. Poschmann, F. Wetter, Handbuch der Dogmengeschichte IV/3 (Busse und Krankensalbung), Freiburg, 1968. Other discoveries of Jewish Christian material remains include V. Corbo, The House of St. Peter at Capharnaum (trans. S.S. aller), Jerusalem, 1969 and R.H. Smith, "Pella of the Decapolis," Archaeology 21, 1968, 134ff. (Jewish Christian sarcophagus, believed to date to the second century). Regarding the latter excavations conducted by the Wooster expedition in 1967, it should be noted that the historical veracity of the flight to Pella in 66 or 67 has been questioned by J. Munck, G. Brandon, and G. Strecker; cf. H.J. Schoeps, op.cit. 262ff. and by the same author, Studien zur unbekannten Religions- und Geistesgeschichte, Göttingen, 1963, 71ff.

[133] E. Testa, op.cit. 466; cf. E. Meyers, Jewish Ossuaries: Rebirth and Reburial, Rome, 1971.

A second area in which it has been proposed that Jewish visual imagery preceded and was the source of early Christian art is the study of medieval book illumination. For present purposes very little needs to be said about this theory. Material evidence to support it is lacking.[134] Prior to the discovery of the pictorial cycle preserved in the Dura synagogue inferences concerning the earlier, pre-Christian existence of a tradition of Jewish book illumination were made on the basis of the oldest surviving Christian illustrated manuscripts, the oldest of which do not date before the sixth century. Now it is generally agreed that the Dura cycle was not a creation *de novo* but that it presupposes an earlier tradition, perhaps a tradition of Jewish book illumination.[135]

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[134] J. Gutmann, "The Illustrated Jewish Manuscript in Antiquity: The Present State of the Question," Gesta 5, 1966, 40, 41; M. Simon, "Remarques sur les synagogues a images de Doura et de Palestine," Spätantike und Byzanz, Neue Beiträge zur Kunst des ersten Jahrtausends nach Christus, Baden Baden, 1952, 31-44; T. Klauser, "Der Beitrag der orientalischen Religionen, insbesondere des Christentums, zur spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Kunst," Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Quaderno N. 105, 1968, 59.

The theory that there existed a tradition of Jewish book illumination in antiquity has been supported and continues to be supported by many scholars. Among its most faithful defenders are C.O. Nordström and K. Weitzmann, both of whom have adduced *haggadic* and *midrashic* illustrated materials to verify their theory. But even this does not constitute irrefutable evidence, since much of the same rabbinic material as adduced is contained in Christian sources of the Patristic period. It is, therefore, not necessary to derive the given examples of rabbinic illustration directly from hypothetical Jewish models.[136] After nearly a century of research the most promising area of study, in which the putative existence of illustrated Jewish manuscripts in antiquity may be tested, is still the study of the Ashburnham Pentateuch. Bezalel Narkiss has inherited the responsibility of overseeing the publication of the Ashburnham Pentateuch in photo facsimile, and in the next few years we may expect that he will address himself to the question of the illustrated Jewish manuscript in antiquity.[137]

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[135] T. Klauser, *ibid*.

[136] For selective bibliography of works by Nordström and Weitzmann cf. *No Graven Images* (ed. J. Gutmann), New York, 1971, LX, LXIII.

The third and last area of study in which the Jewish hypothesis has been tested is the study of traditional early Christian iconography. Once again the attempt to derive early Christian images from Jewish models encounters the same difficulty which we have seen above, namely the absence of convincing material proofs. But despite this absence, certain observations can be made in favor of Jewish priority and in support of Christian dependence on Jewish models.[138]

The repertory of early Christian iconography is comprised predominantly of motifs drawn from the Old Testament. This fact has been observed continuously in the study of early Christian art.[139] Those who have attempted to account for this fact have frequently inclined to the opinion that the preponderance of Old Testament motifs in an early Christian context must presuppose the existence of earlier Jewish models which Christians adapted to their own purposes. If Christians had developed their own iconography de novo, it is argued, then surely they would have drawn the majority of their visual paradigms from the New Testament, not from the Old Testament. The argument has a logical coherence, and indeed there is evidence, as adduced by D. Kaufmann and K. Michel, that Jewish liturgical prayer formularies may have served in some degree as prototypes for Christian petitional funerary prayers and for Christian iconography.[140] But the absence of material evidence to verify this thesis is an important deterrent. It is conceivable that the prayer paradigms given by Kaufmann and Michel were known prior to Christianity only in spoken or written form and were never translaterd into pictorial form in their original pre-Christian Jewish context. In any event if these liturgical materials were translated into pictorial form in a pre-Christian context no material examples survive or are known to us.

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[137] B . Narkiss, "Towards a further study of the Ashburnham Pentateuch," CA 19, 1969, 45-60.

[138] On this subject cf. the articles and bibliography contained in the above-mentioned collection edited by J. Gutmann.

[139] T. Klauser, JbAC 4, 1961, 128-136 (there the older bibliography).

If we base our observations on surviving evidence alone then it must be said that the actual points of contact between the earliest Christian iconography and contemporary

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[140] For works by Kaufmann and Michel see notes 64 and 65 above. It is to be regretted that Kaufmann devoted so relatively little space in his article to the discussion of Jewish liturgical prayers.

Jewish iconography are exceedingly rare. In his far-reaching reinvestigations of the origins and interpretation of early Christian art. T. Klauser has followed the position of liberal Protestantism: in its essence and origin Christianity was an aniconic religion. From an analysis of the abbreviated compositional character of the earliest surviving Christian images Klauser believes that images and image making entered Christianity in the early third century via glyptic art. It is known for instance from Clement's famous passage in the *Paedagogus* 3/59 that there existed at least in Christian Alexandria the need for signet rings bearing an iconography which could be harmonized with Christianity. The need existed, and Klauser construes this as the first occasion almost *par hazard*, for images to have entered into Christian usage. Klauser also believes that the source of early Christian glyptic art and hence the effective source of all early Christian art, was a repertory of earlier Jewish pictorial images. To prove the theory that such a repertory existed Klauser has adduced a variety of sources and arguments inferred from these sources. The most intriguing of these sources, apart from the Dura synagogue itself, and in my opinion the most convincing of his arguments, concerns the three famous coins from Apameia depicting Noah and his wife.[141]

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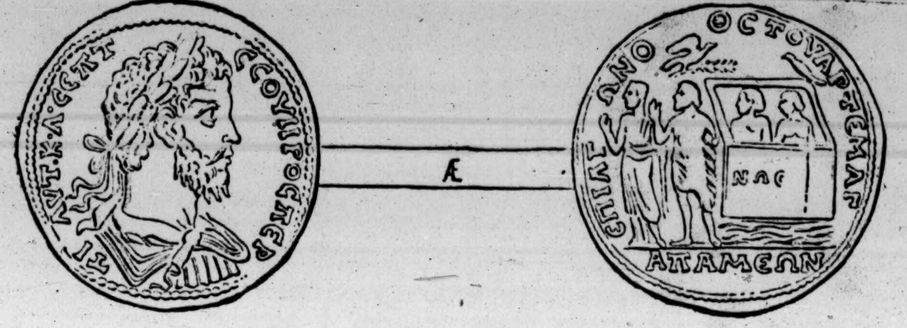
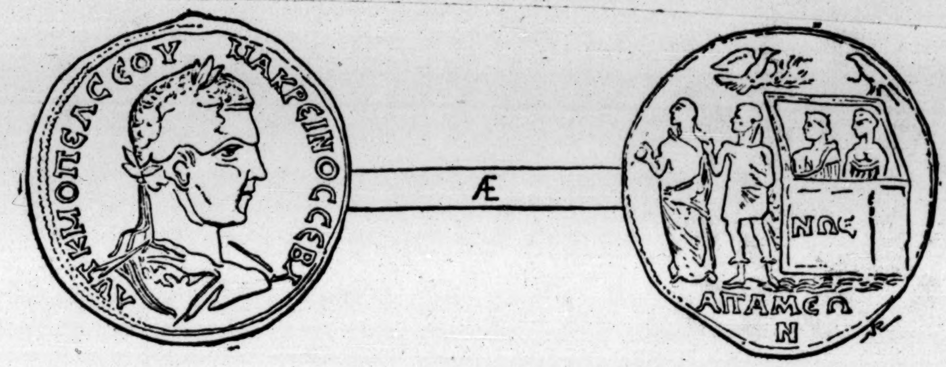
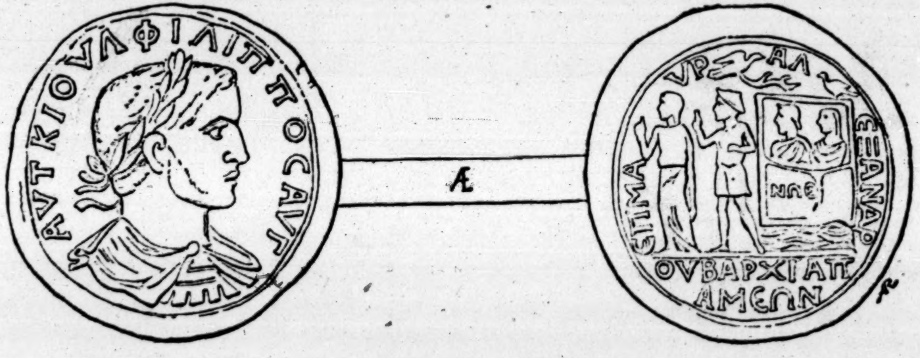
[141] T. Klauser, *JbAC* 4, 1961, 136-145.



825. — Monnaie de Septime Sévère.



826. — Monnaie de Macrin,



827. — Monnaie de Philippe.

Monnaies d'Apamée. D'après Madden, *Numismatic chronicle*, 1866, pl. VI.

The coins in question have been known at least since the seventeenth century and have been subjected to a complicated history of interpretation.[142] Klauser's explanation of them is relatively straight-forward and in most respects acceptable. All three coins were struck in the first half of the third century. On the obverse they show in profile the busts of Septimius Severus, Macrinus and Philip the Arab. On the reverse of each coin the iconography is the same (although the superscription changes in each case)

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[142] H. Leclercq, "Apamée," DACL I/2, 2500ff.

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showing to the right Noah and his wife in the box-like (kibotos) ark, above them to the left the dove, and above to the right sitting on the cover of the box-like ark is the raven. In a second scene to the left Noah and his wife are shown on terra firma in a position of prayer, giving thanks to Yahweh for their deliverance. The inspiration for this iconography, appearing here on a pagan coin, must have come from a Jewish source. For Klauser, and for many others, this means that a Jewish tradition of Biblical illustration existed early in the third century and possibly earlier.[143] It is difficult to infer the extent of this tradition from this one example alone, although the fact that such a tradition did exist, in some form, is indisputable.[144] From an analysis of the pictorial composition of these coins Klauser believes this Noah iconography was originally conceived for Jewish glyptic art.[145] And he believes further that the evidence from the Apameia coins indicates clearly that Christians borrowed their Noah iconography directly from Jewish models. This theory needs further elaboration since the earliest Christian Noah iconography, which is known in western sources only and which is found variously on sarcophagi, on wall paintings, and in the numerous minor arts, differs considerably from the Jewish Noah iconography found on these coins.[146] Nevertheless, with Klauser, I believe there can be no "mathematical certainty" in these matters. It is a question of probabilities, and the probability at this point favors the Jewish hypothesis.[147]

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[143] T. Klauser art.cit.; A. Grabar, "Images bibliques d'Apamée et fresques de la synagogue de Doura," CA 5, 1951, 9-14.

[144] H. Leclercq, art.cit., 2507ff.

[145] T. Klauser, art.cit., 142, 143.

Apart from pictorial representations of Noah, at what other points is it possible that Jewish and Christian Biblical iconography intersect? In the example of a pendent amulet, an oval limonite from the collection of Edward Theodore Newell, Klauser has proposed once again "die Abhängigkeit der christlichen Glyptik von der jüdischen...", and thus via glyptic art the ultimate dependence of Christian iconography on Jewish prototypes.[148] The obverse of this amulet depicts the sacrifice of Abraham and has been described in full by C. Bonner. The reverse contains an inscription, in Hebrew or Aramaic, believed to be a magical, esoteric formulary, but to date untranslated.[149] The problem here is twofold: how do we know that the amulet in question is Jewish and not

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[146] A list of Noah representations from the Roman catacombs is contained in WMK, 332ff. There is no biblical iconography in any of the six Jewish catacombs in Rome. On this subject cf. H. Leon, The Jews of Ancient Rome, Philadelphia, Pa., 1960, 195ff.

[147] T. Klauser, "Der Beitrag...", art.cit., 55, n.117.

[148] T. Klauser, JbAC 4, 1961, 143.

[149] C. Bonner, Studies in Magical Amulets Chiefly Graeco-Egyptian, Ann Arbor, 1950, 310, 311.

Christian, and how do we date the amulet? The presence of a Semitic script does not prove its Jewish provenance.[150]

Otherwise the sacrifice of Abraham is known in a Jewish context from the well known Torah shrine at Dura.[151] Portrayed is the moment of Yahweh's intervention and deliverance; numerous Christian parallels depicting this same moment are known from early Christian sarcophagi, wall paintings, gold glasses, lamps, gems, and miscellaneous objects.[152] But again, as in the case of Noah iconography, if it can be said that the Dura version of the sacrifice of Abraham represents the Jewish visual recension of this scene, then it must be noted that the Christian recension of the same scene differs in important ways from its Jewish parallel. H.J. Geischer has traced the origins of Abraham/Isaac iconography to pagan prototypes which date, according to A. Furtwängler and others, to the third and second centuries B.C.[153] A proponent of the Jewish hypothesis, Geischer believes that these pagan models are only the remote prototypes and that at some undetermined date the iconography of human sacrifice and execution passed into Judaism and was adapted to the Abraham/Isaac narration. It is then from this Jewish pictorial type that Christians inherited their Abraham/Isaac iconography. The difficulty in verifying this theory lies once again in the absence of material proofs. The earliest surviving Jewish version of sacrifice of the Abraham is found at Dura and it, or more properly the tradition which it represents, does not appear clearly to have been the iconographic model for the earliest Christian versions of the same scene.[154]

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[150] As noted by H. Strauss, "Jüdische Quellen frühchristlicher Kunst. Optische oder literarische Anregung ?", ZNTW 57, 1966, 136.

[151] Final Report VIII/1, pl. LI.

[152] I.S. van Woerden, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Abraham," VC 15, 214ff.

[153] H.J. Geischer, "Heidnische Parallelen zum frühchristlichen Bild des Isaak-Opfers," JbAC 10, 1967, 127ff.

In 1958 H. Stern wrote that in his opinion Jewish art had "a direct influence on Christian funerary imagery."[155] Stern based this conjecture on observations which he had made concerning the well-known image of the seated musician in the upper left hand corner of the lower central panel above the Torah shrine in the Dura synagogue. In 1966 the Egyptian Department of Antiquities uncovered two large fragments of floor mosaic in a sixth century synagogue near

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[154] Again it is a question of probabilities. All the elements are at Dura which are found variously in western Christian representations. But the composition and arrangement of the elements is different at Dura. The Dura iconography emerges in a Christian context in the fourth century; cf. Geischer, art.cit., 132, n.34.

[155] H. Stern, "The Orpheus in the Synagogue of Dura Europos," JWarb 21, 1958, 6.

Gaza.[156] The mosaic fragment in the central aisle of the building contains an image of David the King, executed according to the visual type of Orpheus. The royal David is shown in a seated posture, the head surrounded by a nimbus and wearing a jeweled diadem; the figure is dressed in a long blueish-red _chiton_ and a yellow overgarment, and is shown plucking the strings of a lyre with the left hand and holding the characteristic _plectron_ in the right hand. In this figure Stern sees the verification of his earlier supposition, that Jewish art influenced Christian funerary imagery.

By inferences drawn from three sources, the apocryphal psalm 151, the above mentioned seated musician figure at Dura, and the supposed Orpheus in the Roman Jewish catacomb of the Vigna Randanini, Stern proposes that there existed a pre-Christian Jewish Alexandrian conflation of David with Orpheus.[157] He proposes further that this Orphic David is the immediate prototype for the images of Orpheus (notably in the Roman catacombs) which appear in an early Christian context.[158] Since the seventeenth century it has been a tradition within Christian archaeology to regard the image of Orpheus in the Roman catacombs as a symbolization of the Orphic Christ.[159] It has been thought that Christians, in their effort to achieve a conflation of Orphic iconography with Christian types, drew directly on pagan models. In Stern's reconstruction Jews had already adapted Orphic iconography to their own purposes prior to Christianity. Christians in turn were able to draw directly from Judaism in setting forth their own Orphic iconography. Since an Orphic David already existed as a visual type in Judaism it would be more proper to refer to the early Christian figures of Orpheus as a combination of Orphic, Davidic and Christian elements.

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[156] J. Leclant, "Fouilles et travaux en Egypte et au Soudan 1964/65," _Orientalia_ 35/2, N.S., 1966, 135, Tab XXXIX (73), XL (74-75).

[157] H. Stern, "Un nouvel Orphée-David dans une mosaique du VI^{e} siècle," _AIBL/Comptes Rendus_, 1970, 63ff.

[158] The six surviving images of Orpheus which appear in the Christian catacombs of Rome are listed in J.B. Friedmann, _Orpheus in the Middle Ages_, Cambridge, Mass., 1970, 42ff.

There are numerous problems raised by Stern's theory and the subject itself is much too broad to receive full treatment here. Orpheus was a well-known figure in Jewish Hellenistic (Alexandrian) literature. Numerous fragments preserved in later Christian sources show the effort of certain Jewish Alexandrian historians and philosophers to subordinate Orphism to Judaism by establishing the fictitious filiation of Orphic doctrine from Mosaic monotheism. But, to my knowledge, an Orphic David does not appear in Jewish Hellenistic literature prior to the advent of Christianity.[160] The presence of an Orphic allusion in psalm 151, now known in its Hebrew original from 11QPs^a, the psalm scroll discovered February, 1956 at Wadi Qumran, is disputed.[161] The identity of the seated musician at Dura, executed after the visual convention of Orpheus, is not secure, although the theory that it represents David is an intelligent guess.[162] And finally, the proposed image of Orpheus in the Vigna Randanini is, in my opinion, a fiction.[163] I shall deal at greater length with these subjects in another place. For the present it is important only to note that a pictorial David-Orpheus conflation was certainly known to Palestinian Judaism in the sixth century A.D. The Gaza mosaic is proof positive of this fact. But we do not know the earlier history of this conflation. We certainly do not know that it pre-dated Christianity and constituted the pictorial source of early Christian Orpheus representations.

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[159] A. Bosio (Aringhi edition), Roma Subterranea novissima I, Rome, 1651, 560-64, 596.

The dependence of early Christian iconography on

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[160] Orpheus and Moses were the two major figures that were compared; cf. Friedman, op.cit., 1ff.

[161] J. Sanders, "Ps 151 in 11QPs^a," ZATW 75, 1963, 73-86; P. Skehan, "The Apocryphal Psalm 151," CBQ 25, 1963, 407ff.

[162] Final Report VIII/1, 215ff.

[163] T. Roller, Les Catacombes de Rome I, Paris, 1881, p.IV/a.

Jewish models cannot be conclusively proved from the surviving material remains alone. On the other hand it cannot be conclusively disproved. Final judgment should be reserved until more in particular is known about the history of Jewish pictorial art in late antiquity. The absence of positive material evidence that Christians borrowed directly from Jews in developing a Christian tradition of biblical (or non-biblical) iconography does not in itself constitute a final proof of Christian independence from Judaism. Tentatively however, it must be said that the surviving evidence seems to indicate that Jewish pictorial art in late antiquity and early Christian art developed somewhat independently of each other, possibly as parallel historical phenomena. At present the degree of direct influence from Jewish pictorial models to Christian iconography appears to have been negligible.

We come now to the conclusion of this survey. Since the amount of material covered here is considerable it has been necessary to condense the foregoing historiographic complex to its barest outline. The primary purpose of this survey was to outline the major interpretative approaches in the study of early Christian art. Each interpretative approach presupposes a theory of the origins of early Christian art, and each theory of origins determines to a considerable degree what is understood by Christian attitudes toward images. Some historians have expressed the conviction that early Christian art originated in the context of thought, doctrine, and dogma. Wilpert and von Harnack would have agreed in principle, although the conclusions that they drew, in respect to the question of early Christian attitudes toward visual images, were radically different. Others regard the early Christian cultic experience as the generating factor in the birth and formation of early Christian visual imagery. The search for a typological origin among the proponents of this group has settled on prayer, especially community prayer, as the effective source and cause of early Christian art.

Art historians look primarily for material origins and use their own special language of formal and iconographic description in order to determine such origins. Classicists, philologians, historians, and archaeologists trained in the civilizations of Greece and Rome have viewed early Christian art from the perspective of classical antiquity, just as, more recently, Semitists, Rabbinists, historians and archaeologists of Judaism have looked at early Christian art from the perspective of Judaism or Jewish Christianity. None of these views is sufficient by itself or offers an adequate explanation of the origins of early Christian art. Each, however, has had something to contribute.

With these distinctions in mind we proceed now to the analysis of the earliest written and monumental sources which bear upon the central subject of this study. In the final chapter it will be necessary to consider once again how our picture of the origins and beginning of early Christian art affects our understanding of early Christian attitudes toward images and image-making.

CHAPTER II

THE LITERARY EVIDENCE

1. Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to consider the oldest surviving written evidence for early Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images. It is clear from the preceding chapter that this subject has been investigated often in the past. But never have the terms or the limits or the historical context of this subject been adequately defined. In one respect modern scholarship has advanced significantly our understanding of the early Christian "Bilderfrage," by adding new texts and documents relative to the subject. But Quellenkunde and the writing of history are not the same thing. In interpreting these documents scholars have often reverted to the venerable but otiose practice of classifying them (anachronistically) in Byzantine terminology, viz., pro-image or anti-image. While these terms approximate certain attitudes expressed variously in early Christian documents, they are only approximations and are not terms which help us to understand the problem of the image in its original early Christian context. In fact, they are terms which, because of their later associations in the history of Christian thought and piety, tend to obscure our understanding of the subject within its original context.

The statements found in early Christian written sources relative to the subject of visual images must be understood in relation to their original context. But the failure of modern scholarship to abide by this elementary point of historiography has served to encourage and to approve the numerous erroneous characterizations of the early Christian "Bilderfrage" which have occupied our attention over the past century.

For the present moment the portrayal of primitive Christianity as normatively and theoretically iconophobic, and in practice aniconic has gained acceptance in numerous scholarly circles.[1] My objective here is to show that the written sources relative to the subject support this interpretation only in the most limited sense. But more importantly I would emphasize the importance of considering the relevant statements in their original context. If that is done carefully then I believe one consequence which follows is that the simplistic characterizations of early Christianity (i.e. pro-image or anti-image) dissolve, because they have little or no basis in historical fact. The results of such investigation will prove to be uncertain; many questions will remain unanswered and there will be mostly lacunae in our reconstructed picture of the last two centuries, but at least the sources will be represented faithfully.

I have omitted the discussion of epigraphy in the present chapter because inscriptions, as written sources, do not advance our understanding of the subject. If there were a secure chronology for the Christian inscriptions and graffiti (which I assume exist) from the second and early third centuries, then probably the onomastic study of these inscriptions would yield important results for our understanding of the social composition of various early Christian communities, especially Rome.[2] And in turn, knowledge of the social composition of early Christian groups could have importance for our understanding of the social determinants which lead to the production of the early Christian arts. But the chronological bases on which such judgments could be made are lacking. Early Christian epigraphy, considered in another of its aspects, namely as a source of pictorial symbolism, does have a greater bearing on the present subject, but again with severe chronological limitations. It is only in that aspect, as an archaeological-pictorial source, that I have considered early Christian epigraphy, not here but in chapter three below (Appendix II).

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[1] T. Klauser, "Die Äusserungen der alten Kirche zur Kunst," Atti VI. CIAC, 223-242.

The chronological framework of the present chapter has been determined by the oldest surviving figured monuments of Christianity. Since the objective of this study is to compare and correlate the evidence based on two separate and distinct bodies of source materials, an approximate synchronism of sources is required; otherwise profitable comparison is impossible. There can be no mistaking that by the middle of the third century Christians had made, (or caused to be made), figured monuments; hence the terminus ad quem, approximately 250 A.D.

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[2] I. Kajanto, "Onomastic Studies in the Early Christian Inscriptions of Rome and Carthage," AIRF II/1, 1963, 1-141.

The other end of the chronological framework, the terminus a quo, must remain necessarily somewhat open-ended in the discussion of written remains. The Christian discussion of visual arts and images recorded from the period prior to the mid-third century is, as we shall see, rather limited in its scope. The Christian authors who addressed themselves to this issue did so with a view to achieving their own special objectives. Their discussion was by no means disinterested, pursued only for heuristic purposes; to the contrary, their concerns were immediate and practical, and the tone of their discussion was apologetic from the outset. They inherited the terms and content of their apologies from the their pagan and Jewish predecessors. In fact, the primitive Christian concern for the religious and spiritual status of visual images is really the tail-end of a long development in antiquity, a development which reaches back in Greece at least to Homer and in Palestine to the origins and desert formation of the people, Israel.[3]

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[3] J. Geffcken, "Der Bilderstreit des heidnischen Altertums," ARW 19, 1919, 286. For Judaism cf. Chapter One, p. 73ff.

The correct understanding of the primitive Christian concern for visual arts and images requires that this phenomenon be historically situated and studied, not in isolation, but in the light of relevant precedents and antecedents. It is for this reason more than any other that the terminus a quo in the discussion of written sources relative to our subject should be left somewhat open-ended.

If it were feasible to do so, it would be useful to submit the written sources to geographical limits as well as to the above-mentioned chronological framework. Most of the oldest surviving figured monuments of Christianity are of Roman provenance, and hence the capital commends itself as the obvious geographical choice for the comparison and correlation of evidence obtained from literature and from monuments. But unfortunately such a geographical limitation cannot be justified for the written sources, because the extent of the Roman or Romano-African literary tradition prior to the early third century is simply too limited.

Paul wrote from Corinth between the years A.D. 55 and 58 to Christians residing in Rome, and this constitutes the earliest external written witness to the presence of Christians in the capital. In his letter he reminds the predominantly Gentile, Roman Christians of the inherent connection between image worship and idolatry, Rom. I/18ff., but beyond this bit of information, which may or may not mean that there were image worshippers among the Roman Christians of the mid-first century, we learn nothing about the community's relative attitudes in the matter of visual arts and images.[4]

We know that many persons of Christian or quasi-Christian persuasion were in Rome from the late first century onward. Some stayed there and took up residence in the capital; others were only passing through. A narrative history of Christianity in Rome from its first century beginnings to the eve of the Constantinian period has never been written and probably will never be written. The sources necessary for such an undertaking are either irretrievably lost or are preserved in fragmentary form. Christians residing in Rome wrote speeches, letters, polemical and theological treatises from the late first century onward, but until the early third century writings of Hippolytus, rigorist and schismatic bishop, the extent of the surviving literature is not great.[5] In particular, the subject of images and visual arts is mentioned only occasionally in the Roman Christian literature of the second and early third centuries and receives only a minimal amount of attention in this literature. In other words, while it would be advantageous if we could compare and correlate the relevant monumental and written evidence from Rome alone, there is not enough of the latter to justify such a limitation. In limiting the written evidence to Rome alone we would have to eliminate, among others, Tertullian, and this would be a momentous loss.

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[4] For the date of Romans cf. H.W. Schmidt, Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer, Berlin, 1968. The Christians whom Paul addressed may have been a separately constituted ecclesia. But the theory that the recipients of his letter were members of the synagogue until Paul's arrival in Rome, and that it was under his influence that they separated from the synagogue, has been argued plausibly by E.A. Judge and G.S.R. Thomas, "The Origin of the Church at Rome: A New Solution," RTR 25, 1966, 81-94. I would like to thank Prof. Judge for bringing his article to my attention. The social and ethnic composition of the early Christian community at Rome is discussed by O. Michel, Der Brief an die Römer, Göttingen, 1963, 7-14 (there the older literature).

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[5] The oldest surviving written records of Christianity in Rome were surveyed by A. Von Harnack, Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius, Berlin, 1893, 39-47, 49-58, 589-650. For the text of Clement's Letter to the Corinthians, cf. Die apostolischen Väter (hrsg. F.X. Funk, K. Bihlmeyer, W. Schneemelcher), Tübingen, 1956^2, 35ff. The second letter ascribed to Clement was not written by him, is not in epistolary form, and is not of Roman provenance; cf. B. Altaner, A. Stuiber, Patrologie, Freiburg, 1966^7, 88; II Clement, I/6, contains the standard apologetic topos against idols. For the text of the apocryphal, pseudo-apocalypse entitled the Shepherd and composed toward the end of the first century (or slightly later), by the former slave, Hermas, cf. Die apostolischen Väter I. Der Hirt des Hermas, GCS 48 (hrsg. Molly Whittaker), Berlin, 1956. The possibly threefold recension of the Shepherd is discussed in S. Giet, Hermas et les Pasteurs, Paris, 1963. Marcus Minucius Felix apparently modelled his Octavius on Tertullian's Apologeticum and hence the former should be assigned to the early third century; cf. J. Beaujeu, Minucius Félix: Octavius, Bruxelles, 1964, xliv ff. and C. Becker, Tertullians Apologeticum, Werden und Leistung, Munich, 1954, 309-332. For the editions of the Octavius, cf. B. Altaner/A. Stuiber, op. cit., 146ff. The editions of Justin Martyr and Hippolytus are noted, ibid., 65ff., 164ff. The Roman Acta Apollonii are extant in a Greek version, KKR 30-35, and in an Armenian version, F.C. Conybeare, The Armenian Apology and Acts of Apollonius and Other Monuments of Early Christianity, London, 1896^2. The two versions differ greatly; Eusebius, HE V/21/2, 3, 4, knew still another version. In their present form the acta combine (erroneously) sections from the lost apology with a record of the trial. This is especially clear in KKR 31/22ff. where Apollonius is permitted to expound his monotheistic theology and expatiate on the foolishness of worshipping creation, the absurdities of Athenian and Egyptian religion, the errors inherent in idol worship, etc. These are traditional apologetic topoi which in their present literary context are simply out of place, cf. T.D. Barnes, "Pre-Decian Acta Martyrum," JThS N.S., 19, 1968, 520, 521, and by the same author, "Legislation against Christians," JRS 18, 1968, 46-48.

When one surveys the scholarship relative to our subject it is striking how comparatively little attention has been paid to the New Testament.[6] It is common to treat this subject as if the New Testament had only indirect relevance to it, in other words, as if the question of images were itself the historical product of the period after the formation of the New Testament canon.[7] The most common manner of treating the literature of the New Testament with respect to the early Christian "Bilderfrage" is to excerpt New Testament passages where they can be used to corroborate one or another of the attitudes expressed in the later history of Christian literature. There is a certain justice in this procedure in so far as the question of attitudes toward images and visual arts does not figure prominently in any of the New Testament documents.

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[6] As for instance, the above mentioned works of N. Baynes, H. von Campenhausen, T. Klauser, H. Koch and W. Elliger, Chapter I, p. 2, n. 2, 3 and p. 27. Individual studies of εἰκών and related terms, ἱερόν, ναός, εἴδωλον, can be found in G. Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1964ff., passim; for the anthropological and cosmological use of εἰκών cf., W. Eltester, *Eikon im Neuen Testament*, Berlin, 1958.

[7] On this subject cf. H. von Campenhausen, *Die Entstehung der christlichen Bibel*, Tübingen, 1968 (there the older literature).

On the other hand, the evidence from the New Testament, though not great in extent, is itself formative for the later history of the "Bilderfrage." It is not enough to begin with the written evidence of the second century and then draw in on an _ad hoc_ basis New Testament passages as merely corroborative materials. The problem was already there in the first century, at least _in semine_. Since the essential components of the problem were already contained in the New Testament, the latter needs to be considered in its own right and not just indirectly as reflected in the later literature of the church.

Almost all of the oldest surviving written evidence of Christian concern for images is related to the polemic against idolatry. Two different but related forms of idolatry bore the brunt of the attack. The first of these was the imperial cult, the fictions which it propagated, and the cultic appurtenances which it employed in order to establish and maintain its cultus. Among these appurtenances the emperor's image played an important role. The second form of idolatry which was attacked and parodied was popular religion with its myths, superstitions, and irrationalities, and with its images of the pantheon which were an indispensible feature of this religious tradition. The Christian discussion of images was largely defined by these two components, the imperial cult image and the images of the pagan pantheon.

2. *The Image of the Emperor*.

Mk. 12/13-17, par., is a conflict paradigm and is concerned with the early church's understanding of the proper relationship between religion and the socio-political order.[8] The pericope opens with a familiar rabbinic *captatio benevolentiae*,[9] addressed to Jesus by Pharisees and Herodians:

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[8] *The Greek New Testament* (ed. K. Aland, M. Black, B. Metzger, A. Wikgren) London, 1966. The pericope is known in different form in Logion 100 of the *Gospel of Thomas* and in the so-called *Unknown Gospel*, Egerton Papyrus 2, Fragment 2, recto, vss. 47-50, dated from the mid-second century. The latter version minimizes in greater degree than do the Synoptists the potential threat of Christianity to the political order, cf. H.E. Bell, T.C. Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and Other Early Christian Papyri*, London, 1935, 11, 20; E. Stauffer, *Christus und die Caesaren*, Hamburg, 1960^5, 121ff. An important addition to our understanding of *Mk*. is George R. Edwards, *Jesus and the Politics of Violence*, New York, 1972. Edwards reviews with admirable clarity the arguments in support of the theory that *Mk*. was written as a political gospel, "an apology (defense) addressed to Roman Christians to promote cordial relations between Christianity and Rome by obscuring Jesus' kinship with the Jewish freedom fighters, the Zealots." p. 22ff. Edwards demonstrates convincingly that this interpretation of *Mk*. is unsupported by the sources, that *Mk*. is "beyond politics," and that instead *Mk*. is a gospel teaching discipleship modelled on the *theologia crucis* (*MK*. 10/42-45).

[9] H. Strack, P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament I. Das Evangelium nach Mätthaus*, Munich, 1956, 883ff. H. Loewe, *Render unto Caesar*, Cambridge, 1940, 103ff., has noted the peculiarity of the Greek phrase οὐ γὰρ βλέπεις εἰς πρόσωπον ἀνθρώπον and has shown that this unidiomatic phrase is probably a literal translation from a Semitic original as preserved in the old Syriac (Evangelion Da-Mepharreshe) and Peshitta versions

Διδάσκαλε, οἴδαμεν ὅτι ἀληθὴς εἶ καὶ οὐ μέλει σοι περὶ οὐδενός, οὐ γὰρ βλέπεις εἰς πρόσωπον ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλ' επ' ἀληθείας τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ διδάσκεις.

Then follows the famous question, the first of four questions all of them modelled on halakic prototypes: ἔξεστιν δοῦναι κῆνσον καίσαρι ἢ οὔ; δῶμεν ἢ μὴ δῶμεν;[10] The question is designed to jeopardize Jesus and discredit his teaching. If he answers that it is not permitted to pay the κῆνσος then Jesus becomes a political

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of the pericope. Loewe notes that the Peshitta and ancient Syriac versions of Luke and Matthew as well as the ancient Syriac of Mark use the idiom ܢܣܒ ܒܐܦܐ, meaning "to favor." Only the Peshitta version of Mk. has ܢܚܪ ܒܦܪ̈ܨܘܦܐ ܕܒܢܝ̈ܢܫܐ, which Loewe translates as "gaze at the faces of people." From these alternative readings Loewe conjectures the conflation of two questions, one of which, "the original," was "do you think it idolatrous to gaze at a coin?" However, ܢܚܪ ܒܦܪ̈ܨܘܦܐ ܕܒܢܝ̈ܢܫܐ is better translated "give heed to the persons of men." Thus the Peshitta version of Mk. is easily explained as a paraphrase of the other readings rather than as a true variant. Loewe's introduction of Syriac and Aramaic materials is instructive as background to the non-idiomatic Greek construction. But his conjecture concerning the conflation of two questions is textually unnecessary. I would like to thank my wife, Kathleen McVey, for assistance with this passage.

[10] D. Daube, "Four Types of Questions," JThS, N.S., 2, 1951, 45-48.

radical in the eyes of the Romans.[11] If on the other hand he answers positively he loses the respect of the Jewish nationalists who had gathered at that time in Jerusalem for the Passover. The well-known answer separates artifically the sphere of religion from the socio-political realm. The overall *Tendenz* of the pericope is to minimize the potential political threat which Christianity posed to the Roman authorities.[12]

Probably the second gospel was committed to written form before the destruction of Jerusalem. In any event the mention in vs. 13 of the Ἡρῳδιανοί reflects a tradition which dates from the period between the deposition of Archelaus by Augustus in 6 A.D. and the death of Herod Agrippa in 44 A.D.[13] The historical reliability of this pericope in reflecting an authentic teaching of Jesus is uncertain. The form critical study of the pericope has yielded no certain criteria for distinguishing the authentic teaching from later community accretions, although Bultmann's opinion appears to have gained widespread acceptance: "An Gemeindebildung zu denken, liegt m.E., kein Grund vor."[14] The passage has a complicated exegetical -historical background involving the loyalties of the Jews to their overlords, the rabbinic teaching about such loyalties, the problematic relationship of this pericope to Jesus' teaching as represented in the Capernaum incident, *Mt*. 17/22-27, and its relationship to the contradictory evidence of the charge against Jesus in *Lk*. 23/2. Finally the idolatrous character of both the κηνσος and the δηνάριον (given in *Mt*. 22/19 as τὸ νόμισμα τοῦ κήνσου) are brought into question.

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[11] Jews hated the κῆνσος or *census capitum*, but never with so much vehemence as was shown in opposition to the *fiscus Judaicus*, cf. Loewe, *op.cit.*, 38ff.; H. Strack, P. Billerbeck, *op.cit.* I, 884.

[12] On this subject cf. Edwards, *op.cit.*, 50ff.

[13] W. L. Knox, *The Sources of the Synoptic Gospels I, St. Mark*, Cambridge, 1953, 10. The traditional view of *Mk*. as a Roman gospel addressed to a Gentile audience was expounded by B.W. Bacon, *Is Mark a Roman Gospel?*, Cambridge, Mass., 1919. More recently Ernst Lohmeyer has argued that Mark was a Galilean gospel; cf., *Galiläa und Jerusalem*, Tübingen, 1936. Lohmeyer's theory has met with limited acceptance; cf. Edwards, *op.cit.*, 49.

The one feature of the pericope which directly relates to the subject of this study concerns the iconography of the coin in question and the associations which that iconography would have evoked in the minds of the Jews who confronted Jesus. To illustrate his teaching Jesus expressly calls for a denarius, a coin which was not minted locally but which was well known to Jews because it was the coin required for the payment of the *census capitum* (as noted in Mt. 22/19). The denarius of Tiberius showed on the obverse the laureated head of the emperor facing right with the superscription: TI CAESAR DIVI AUG F AUGUSTUS. The reverse showed Livia, the emperor's mother as Pax personified, facing to the right and seated on a throne, diademed and robed, holding a sceptre in the right hand and a palm branch in the left with the superscription: PONTIF MAXIM.[15]

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[14] R. Bultmann, *Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition*, Göttingen, 1961^5, 25.

Loewe has assembled and interpreted the contemporary evidence for rabbinic attitutes toward imagery of this type and has shown that there were Jews who carried their rigorism to such an extent that they refused to look upon coins altogether because of their idolatrous associations.[16] Perhaps the most famous of these was Rabbi Nahum, son of Simai, who as is related in the 'Abodhah Zarah, was called by posterity a "man of the holy of holies" because he refused during his lifetime to gaze upon coins.[17] A Jew in the tradition of

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[15] Loewe, op.cit., 97ff.

[16] ibid., 65ff.

[17] ibid., 88ff. In the ninth book of his Philosophumena, composed ca. 225, Hippolytus includes an interesting account of a rigoristic faction within the now famous Jewish sectaries known as the Essenes. According to Hippolytus these Essenes refused to handle a coin, saying that it was not right to carry, to look upon, or to make an image: ὡς μηδὲ νόμισμα βαστάζειν, λέγοντες μὴ δεῖν εἰκόνα ἢ φέρειν ἢ ὁρᾶν ἢ ποιεῖν...

Hippolytus Werke III, Refutatio Omnium Haeresium, GCS 26, (hrsg. P. Wendland), Leipzig, 1916, IX/26, 260. In addition Hippolytus says that these rigoristic Essenes conscientiously eschewed any urban environs, that they refused to enter a city lest they pass beneath a gate at which statues might be erected, for they regarded it as unlawful to pass beneath statues: διὸ οὐδὲ εἰς πόλιν τις αὐτῶν εἰσπορεύεται, ἵνα μὴ διὰ πόλης εἰσέλθη ἐφ' ἧς ἀνδριάντες ἔπεισιν, ἀθέμιτον τοῦτο ἡγούμενοι τὸ ὑπὸ εἰκόνας παρελθεῖν. ibid. Where did Hippolytus get this information about a rigoristic branch of the Essenes and how reliable is it? Josephus' well-known account of the Essenes in the second book of his

Rabbi Nahum could hardly have failed to perceive the idolatrous character of the denarius in question.

The point of interest for our purposes is of course

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Jewish War does not contain this information, nor is it, to my knowledge, contained in any of the other sources relative to the history of the Essenes, cf. *Flavii Iosephi Opera Vi. De Bello Judaico*...(ed. B. Niese), Berlin, 1894, II/119-166. We know that Josephus and Hippolytus exploited a common source in their portrayals of the Essenes but in important details their accounts differ, and frequently Hippolytus' account reflects "usages closer than those of Josephus to Jewish practices as reported in rabbinic literature." M. Smith, "The Description of the Essenes in Josephus and the Philosophumena," *HUCA* 29, 1958, 275. Hippolytus' account stands on its own and has value independent of Josephus. Whether the information concerning images is correctly combined with the account of the Essenes needs to be tested against the appropriate Jewish sources. It is not unlikely that Hippolytus had before himself the translation of a Jewish or Jewish Christian source which he did not understand. He was misinformed about Jewish sectarianism in general; he thought for instance that the Zealots and the Sicarii were branches of the Essenes, of whom he writes: ... Ζηλωταὶ καλούμενοι, ὑπό τινων δὲ Σικάριοι *Flavii Iosephi*..., *op.cit*., 260. It may be that he simply predicated of the Essenes practices which properly belonged elsewhere, as for instance in Zealot or rigoristic rabbinic circles. In any event the information which he provides introduces new themes of uncompromising rigorism in the matter of images, viz. refusal to carry an image, and refusal to enter a city lest one pass under an image. These are themes which need to be studied in their own right, because they expand our understanding of Jewish rigorism and its implications. In chapter one of his treatise on the contemplative life, *De Vita Contemplativa* I/7, Philo incorporates traditional *apologetic exempla* (here a variant of Herodotus) concerning the stupidity of image worship. Needless to say the Jewish sectaries, whom Philo calls Therapeutae, living in the region of Lake Mareotis, had nothing to do with such debased practices as image worship, at least not in Philo's account of them. Unfortunately Philo does not tell us if these ascetics were also rigorists.

not what Jews thought but what Jesus is portrayed as having thought. In the matter of looking upon the imperial image with its claims to divinity and upon the cultic scene associated with the imperial image Jesus does not reflect the slightest affinity to the rigorism of certain contemporary rabbis. To the contrary he sees nothing objectionable in looking upon the imperial image, he tells his interlocutors to look at it, just as he counsels them to pay the poll tax. Whether this reproduces the authentic teaching of Jesus is still another question, one which fortunately we do not have to answer here.[18] Whether it does or does not will not affect at least one modest conclusion which may be legitimately inferred from Mk. 12/13-17, namely we have reflected in this pericope a Christian tradition, dating from the first half of the first century and perhaps of Palestinian origin, which in contrast to rabbinic rigorism is latitudinarian in the matter of looking upon the imperial image and its cultic apparatus, at least as portrayed on coinage.

We have seen that Mk. 12/13-17, par., expressed relative concern, even indifference, toward the imperial image on coinage. This stands in marked contrast to the attitude expressed in the *Book of Revelation*, which in its Christian redaction dates from the end of the first century and which is associated geographically with Ionia.[19] *Rev*. expresses open hostility to Rome, the imperial cult and everything connected with it, in particular the imperial image, e.g., 13/14,15, 14/9,11, 15/2, 16/2, 19/20,21, 20/4.

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[18] The form critical evidence supports Bultmann's view that this pericope, excepting vs. 13, is a piece of Christian tradition of pre-Markan Palestinian origin. Christian accedence to Rome's demand is thus not a Markan editorial invention but stands on its own right as part of an earlier Jesus tradition within the Palestinian church; cf. Edwards, op.cit., 50ff.

The effort to disentangle the different literary, historical strata which went into the final Christian redaction of *Rev*. is complicated and full of uncertainties. As a consequence we are never entirely certain that we have made the right connection between literary allusions and historical persons, places, and events.[20] Fortunately for our purposes the identification which is crucial, that of the "beast from the sea," 13/1ff., the second member of an unholy trinity, can be made at least in part from evidence internal to *Rev*. itself.

The first member of the trinity is the δράκων πυρρὸς μέγας, 12/3ff., the great red dragon with its seven heads, ten horns, and seven diadems upon its heads, identified by the author as ὁ ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος, ὁ καλούμενος Διάβολος καὶ ὁ Σατανᾶς, ὁ πλανῶν τὴν οἰκουμένην ὅλην 12/9.[21] The dragon is the adversary of the woman with the child, 12/4, and the dragon attacks her other offspring who are expressly identified as Christians, 12/17. The dragon then takes his stand on the seashore, 12/18.

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[19] R.H. Charles, *The Revelation of St. John* I, New York, 1920, xci-ciii.

[20] Important for the historical background of *Rev*. are: H.D. Wendland, *Geschichtsanschauung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im Neuen Testament*, Göttingen, 1938; S. Giet, *L'Apocalypse et l'Histoire*, Paris, 1957; M. Rissi, *Die Zeit-u. Geschichtsauffassung der Offenbarung des Johannes*, Zürich/Stuttgart, 1965^{2}.

The second member of the unholy trinity is the above mentioned Θηρίον 13/1ff., which the author sees rising from the sea and to whom the dragon gives his power, his throne, and great authority, 13/2. Because he has received authority from Satan, the dragon, men worship this beast, 13/4. He had received a mortal wound in one of his seven heads, in other words had died a violent death, but now the wound was healed, he was restored to life, and the whole of humanity followed him, 13/3.[22] The beast utters forth blasphemies and is permitted to rule for the traditional apocalyptic period of woe, three and one-half years, 13/5, cf. *Dan*. 7/25, 12/7.[23] The beast blasphemes against God and those who dwell in heaven, 13/6, and makes war upon the saints, even conquering them, 13/7. Everyone, excepting the elect, worships the beast and is subject to it, 13/7, 8.

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[21] For mythological elements in the dragon image cf. J. Ernst, *Die eschatologischen Gegenspieler in den Schriften des Neuen Testaments*, Regensburg, 1967, 117-122 (there the older literature).

[22] R.H. Charles, *op.cit.* I, 349ff., sees in the beast the Antichrist, Nero redivivus, "Nero returning with demonic powers from the abyss...." Similarly for J. Ernst, *op.cit.*, 132, the beast is "das römische Imperium und das zur Zeit der Abfassung der Apokalypse sich selbst vergottende römische Kaisertum;" W. Bousset, *Der Antichrist in der Überlieferung des Judentums, des neuen Testaments und der alten Kirche*, Göttingen, 1895.

[23] Charles, *op.cit. I,* 279, 280.

The identity of this beast is revealed by an angel, 17/3ff. There the beast is known by the woman who rides upon him, bearing a cryptic name written on her forehead: Βαβυλὼν ἡ μεγάλη, ἡ μήτηρ τῶν πορνῶν καὶ τῶν βδελυγμάτων τῆς γῆς 17/5. The angel explains further that the seven heads of the beast are seven hills, 17/9. To be sure, *expressis verbis*, Rome is not mentioned, but the allusions all converge on only one possible identity, namely Rome.[24] If the harlot Babylon is Rome then the beast upon whom she sits is the Roman *imperium* personified and incarnate in the principate. In 17/10 the beast is identified collectively as the sum of the kings while in the following verse one king appears to constitute the whole of the beast. Probably the two are interchangeable, collective identity and individual identity. In either case the point remains the same: the beast is the Roman *imperium*, the empire and all that it embraces, known symbolically but actually through the person of the emperor.[25]

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[24] W. Huss, *Die Gemeinde der Apokalypse des Johannes*, Inaugural-Diss., *Ludwig Maximilians Universität, Munich*, 1967, 104.

[25] L. Brun, "Die römischen Kaiser in der Apokalypse" *ZNTW* 26, 1927, 128ff.

There is no agreement about the specific emperors in question within Rev. The author implies that he is writing under the sixth king of Rome, 17/10. Five have fallen, one is to come, and in 17/11 there is mention of an eighth. If one begins the list of caesars with Augustus and excludes the three successors of Nero then six, seven, and eight would be the Flavians.[26] While the weight of both the internal and external evidence points in the direction of a Domitianic date of composition there is no final proof.[27]

The third member of the unholy trinity is the ἄλλο θηρίον, 13/11, which exercises the authority of the first beast (and hence of Satan) and which implements the cult of the first beast by requiring its worship, 13/12. The second beast is called the false prophet, and like the false teachers in Mt. 7/15, appears outwardly like a lamb but speaks like a dragon, 16/3, 19/20, 20/10. Which priesthood the author intends us to identify with this "other beast" is unclear, whether the Roman priesthood in general or in Asia Minor, or a provincial priesthood, or the personified powers of the priesthood.[28] This "other beast" relies on sorcery, deceit, and magic, makes fire descend from heaven, 13/13, executes an image of the first beast which it even causes to speak, and requires all people to worship this image.[29] Those who do not worship this image suffer execution, 13/15, 20/4. But those who do suffer even worse consequences, namely eternal damnation, 14/10,11, 16/2, 10/20,21. The victors are those who refuse and suffer death initially but who will reign with Christ for a milennium, 15/2, 20/4.

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[26] S. Giet, op.cit., 50-69; W. Huss, op.cit., 105.

[27] W. Huss, op.cit., 105.

[28] ibid., 111.

Apart from Rev. itself there is no positive information prior to Pliny's letter to Trajan (X. 96) informing us about the requirement to worship the emperor's image.[30] Although this is not an innovation incompatible with any of the Flavians, it is generally assumed that it was Domitian who first introduced "the offering of incense and wine before the image of the living emperor as a test of loyalty."[31] Domitian made great pretence to his own divinity and extended the honors accorded the emperor through the apparatus of the imperial cult considerably beyond the limits imposed by his predecessors.[32]

T. Barnes has shown that Domitian did not instigate or prosecute a general persecution of Christians during his reign. The portrayal of him as a persecutor of Christians and a second Nero, evolved by Hegesippus, HE III/19ff., and Melito, HE IV/26/9, are fictions, in Melito's case designed to corroborate his theory of the relationship between good government and healthy religion.[33] It is not impossible that Domitian persecuted Christians in the capital, although the evidence which is often adduced in favor of this hypothesis in fact points in the other direction: Flavia Domitilla and Flavius Clemens were almost certainly exiled and executed for reasons other than their adherence to the new religion.[34] In any event there is no evidence that Domitian was in any sense personally responsible for the outbreak of anti-Christian sentiment in Asia Minor which forms the backdrop of both Rev. and I Peter.[35] Like most other pre-Decian persecutions this one was of a local character, inspired by local conditions, probably instigated and prosecuted by pagans or Jews or both, and adjudicated by the local governor or his representative.[36] Even so, this does not change the identity of the "image of the beast." Whatever the delations may have been, the test of loyalty would have followed roughly the same model, as indicated by Pliny, namely sacrifice, in some form, before the emperor's image.

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[29] In other words magic and trickery were used in the imperial cult as elsewhere; cf. F. Poulsen, "Talking, Weeping, and Bleeding Sculptures," AcA 16, 1945, 178-195. J. Geffcken, art.cit., 287/n.1.

[30] Cf. p.137 below.

[31] M.P. Charlesworth, "Some Observations on the Imperial Cult especially in Rome," HTR 28, 1935, 35; cf. E. Beurlier, Le culte rendu aux empereurs romains, Paris, 1890; K.Scott, The Imperial Cult under the Flavians, Stuttgart, 1936.

[32] K. Scott, op.cit., 75ff.

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[33] T.D. Barnes, art.cit., JRS 18, 1968, 35, and by the same author, Tertullian, Oxford, 1971, 143ff.

[34] T.D. Barnes, art.cit., JRS 18, 1968, 35, 36.

[35] Mk., Rev., and I Peter are the three writings of the New Testament which are written in response to circumstances of persecution; cf., J.D. McCaughey, "Three 'Persecution Documents' of the New Testament," ABR 17, 1969, 27-40.

[36] For the importance of the local governor, cf. U. Brasiello, La repressione penale in diritto romano, Naples, 1937.

The New Testament evidence for Christian attitudes toward the imperial image includes then these two extremes, the one indifference in the face of the emperor's image, the other open hostility in its presence. Indifference, in the case of the former, is in fact an attitude which has a very special apologetic intent, namely to minimize the political threat of Christianity to the imperium. This continues to play a role in the literature of Christian apology during the second and third centuries, as we shall see in the following section. But for the present we shall continue this sketch of the history of the latter attitude, open hostility, as expressed in the literature of the second and third centuries.

The tradition embodied in Rev., exhorting opposition to the "image of the beast," is not in any sense a prominent theme in Christian literature after the first century. That it is not is surprising. Christianity was an illegal religion throughout the second and third centuries, the religion of an oppressed and persecuted minority.[37]

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[37] But the juridical basis for the persecution of Christians is unknown; cf. T.D. Barnes, art.cit., JRS 18, 1968, 32ff; A.N. Sherwin-White, The Letters of Pliny, Oxford, 1966, 772ff.; and G.E.M. de Ste. Croix, "Why were the early Christians persecuted?", Past and Present 26, 1963, 6ff.

Because their mores were different, and often for no reason other than this, Christians were unpopular with pagans and Jews, were harassed, and were frequently the scapegoat in periods of local crisis. From one moment to the next Christians hardly knew what concatenation of events, social or natural catastrophies, or mob vagaries would conspire to produce a new outbreak of anti-Christian sentiment. For Christians it was an age of anxiety, and in the midst of that anxiety there continued predictable feelings of hatred mixed with overt acts of opposition to Rome.[38] True, the government did not instigate persecutions of Christians in the pre-Decian period; persecution was instigated as an expression of the *mos maiorum,* which amounted to little more than outright discrimination against people whose ways were different. But it was the government's responsibility to adjudicate the delations submitted against Christians, and this it did scrupulously by exacting from accused Christians a test of loyalty to the *imperium*, symbolized in the person of the emperor.

Under such conditions we would expect that the vigorous expression of opposition to the "image of the beast" would continue in unabated form. We would particularly expect to find the written expression of this opposition within the literary context of Christian apocalyptic. In fact however it is not there. All that we know (and it is not very much) about Christian opposition to the imperial image is preserved to us in a handful of non-apocalyptic sources relating the circumstances under which Christians were required to sacrifice to the image of the emperor.

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[38] R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, Cambridge, Mass., 1966, 95ff.

The literary tradition which combined political eschatology with apocalyptic visions and prophecies, set forth expressly in opposition to Rome, continued to thrive throughout the pre-Constantinian period, especially among the Christians of Asia Minor. But while there is ample evidence of anti-Roman sentiment in early Christian apocalyptic, there is no mention of the emperor's image. The Ascension of Isaiah, the Apocalypse of Peter, the extant fragments of the apocalyptic prophecies of Elchasai, and the eighth book of the Sibyllines all contain traditional refutations of popular religion and its idols but do not discuss the idolatry of the imperial image.[39] This omission is all the more striking in the last named writing which, in Christian form, dates from the second century and which is surely one of the most blatantly anti-Roman, Christian writings of the entire pre-Constantian period.[40] It is not surprising to learn from Justin that the reading of the *Sibyllines* was forbidden in his time (*Apol.* I/44); such lightly veiled revolutionary occultism was simply intolerable to Roman officialdom.[41] Vss. 43, 44 and 122, 123 of the eighth book do indeed make the explicit association of Rome with idolatry but do not identify the form of idolatry as the imperial cult. In the absence of any further evidence we conclude that the Johannine tradition of opposition to "the image of the beast" was lost to the later apocalyptic literature of the pre-Constantinian period.

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[39] The passages in question can be read in English translation in E. Hennecke, W. Schneemelcher, New Testament Apocrypha II, Phila., 1965, 649 (Ascension of Isaiah), 672, 677 (Apoc. of Peter), 750 (prophecies of Elchasai). For the passages from the eighth book of the Sibyllines, Cf. J. Geffcken, Die Oracula Sibyllina, Leipzig, 1902, 142ff., vss. 43, 44, 122, 123, 224, 377-81, 388, 389, 395-98, 487-88.

The author of *Rev.* counseled open opposition to the imperial image. This *paraenesis* does not survive in the extant apocalyptic literature of the second and third centuries, but information pertaining to it is known to us in another literary context, namely in Pliny's celebrated letter to Trajan, X/96, written during the second decade of the second century during his tenure as imperial legate and governor of Bithynia.[42]

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[40] For the date of the eighth book cf. J. Geffcken, *Komposition und Entstehungszeit der Oracula Sibyllina*, *TU* 23/1, Leipzig, 1902, 38-46.

[41] H. Fuchs, *Der geistige Widerstand gegen Rom in der antiken Welt*, Berlin, 1938. Whether anti-Roman sentiments outweighed pro-Roman sentiments among early Christians is still another question. There is of course abundant evidence of the latter, e.g., in the Pastoral epistles, I *Clement* 37, 6/4-61, *Romans* 13/1-7, *I Peter* 2/13-18, *Mk.* 12/13-17 par., and in the voluminous conciliatory literature of Christian apology. A *locus classicus* in regard to the latter was Melito's lost apology, preserved in fragmentary form in *HE* IV 26/4ff. Melito portrays Christianity as not just compatible with the *imperium* but actively supportive of it.

Pliny wrote that delations had been submitted charging certain persons with adherence to Christianity. In determining their culpability he adopted what must have been a precedented practice: to test their loyalty to the *imperium* he required that the accused make an offering of incense and wine before the statue of the emperor, which together with the statues of the gods he had ordered to be brought into the courtroom (...et imagini tuae, quam propter hoc iusseram cum simulacris numinum adferri, ture ac vino supplicarent,...X/96/5).[43] It was Pliny's understanding that true Christians would not accede to this requirement (...quorum nihil cogi posse dicuntur qui sunt re vera Christiani,...X/96/5,6). If they honored the emperor's statue and those of the gods and cursed Christ they were "let off," X/96/6.[44]

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[42] A.N. Sherwin-White, *op.cit.*, 62ff.

[43] Pliny, *Letters and Panegyricus* II, (ed. B. Radice), Cambridge, Mass., 1969. Charlesworth, *art.cit.*, 34: "... if the test of cult-act before the image of the living emperor had been introduced by Domitian we can understand why Pliny, although he had never been present at examinations of Christians, was yet able easily to devise a procedure which would meet the case."

In addition to the witness of Pliny's letter, there is occasional mention in certain pre-Decian acta martyrum of the test of loyalty to the imperium understood as sacrifice made to idols. Apropos of the Lugdunum massacre, Eusebius reports, HE V/1/53, that the slave woman, Blandina, and the fifteen year old boy, Ponticus, resisted attempts to force them to swear by idols (ὀμνύναι κατὰ τῶν εἰδώλων).[45]

The medium length recension of the Acta Justini et sociorum (less reliable than the short recension)[46] suggests that impious laws were passed in order to force the Christians to offer libations before empty idols, *KKR* 15, 19, 20.[47] This information does not appear in the short recension of the *acta* nor does the statement made in the name of Justin and his companions that they were Christians and did not worship idols, *KKR* 17/23, 24. There is no evidence that a persecuting edict was ever passed before Decius.[48] And since this information concerning the worship of idols does not figure in the short recension of the *acta* the reliability of the medium length recension is seriously challenged.

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[44] On "dimittere," cf. Sherwin-White, op.cit., 701.

[45] On the authenticity of this report cf. T.D. Barnes, "Pre-Decian Acta Martyrum," JThS, N.S., 19, 1968, 517-19: Eusebius' report, "despite some fantastic details (V.1.24)", clearly preserves the testimony of eye-witnesses." Lucian's account of the trial of Peregrinus, Eusebius' description of the trial of Polycarp, the acta of the martyrs of Scillium, the acta of Apollonius all show the reluctance of Roman officials to condemn Christians. But Christians, as in Eusebius' report of Blandina and Ponticus were sometimes, even often, "contumacious," obstinate, and stubborn. Pliny's report is instructive in this regard: "...perseverantes (i.e. the Christians) duci iussi. Neque enim dubitabam, qualecumque esset quod faterentur, pertinaciam certe et inflexibilem obstinationem debere puniri." (X.96.3). On contumacia, cf. Sherwin-White, op.cit., 784ff.

[46] The short recension, contained in the Codex Parisinus Graecus 1470, was published by P. Franchi de' Cavalieri Studi e Testi 8, 1902, 25ff. The superiority of the short recension was shown by G. Lazzati, "Gli atti di S. Giustino Martire," Aevum 27, 1953, 473-97. The short, medium, and long versions of the acta are given in Lazzati's Gli sviluppi

Pionius stated in his first speech in the *agora* at Smyrna, before Polemon, the νεωκόρος, and the assembled crowd, *KKR* 46/22, that Christians did not serve the so-called gods of their pagan adversaries nor did they worship their golden statues, *KKR* 48/18, 19 (cf. *HE* IV/14/10, IV/15/46,47).[49]

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46 con't *della letteratura sui martiri nei primi quattro secoli*, Turin, 1956, 119ff. Despite the demonstrated superiority of the short recension, the medium length version continues to be published in such standard works as *Ausgewählte Martyrerakten* (hrsg. R. Knopf, G. Krüger, G. Ruhbach), Tübingen 1965^4, 15ff.

[47] *KKR*: Knopf, Krüger, Ruhbach, *op.cit.*, p.15, lines, 19,20.

[48] T.D. Barnes, *art.cit.*, *JRS* 58, 1968, 45, n. 165.

[49] T.D. Barnes, *art.cit.*, *JThS*, N.S., 19, 1968, 529-31. Eusebius' dates from the Asian martyrs, Polycarp, Metrodorus, and Pionius at Smyrna and Carpus, Papylus, and Agathonice (March 161 to December 168) are erroneous. They may all date from the Decian persecution, but are probably not earlier than this.

And in other *acta* from Asia Minor, those of the so-called Pergamene martyrs, Carpus, Papylus (Paulus?), and Agathonice, Carpus states that it is impossible for him to sacrifice κιβδήλοις φάσμασιν δαιμόνων, *KKR* 9/4, that it is inappropriate for the living to sacrifice to dead gods, *KKR* 9/19, 20, and that he had never sacrificed to idols, *KKR* 10/3, 15 (cf. *HE* IV/15/48).[50]

None of these sources explicitly includes the emperor's image among the idols in question. Given the context and the information provided by Pliny, however, it is not unreasonable to assume that the imperial image would have been among the idols mentioned. The only pre-Decian *acta* which do mention *expressis verbis* the image of the emperor are the controversial *Acta Apollonii*.[51] There the *praefectus praetorio*, Perennis (A.D. 180 or 182 to 185),[52] orders Apollonius to sacrifice to the gods and to the image of the emperor (Commodus): καὶ θῦσον τοῖς θεοῖς καὶ τῇ εἰκόνι τοῦ αὐτοκράτορος *KKR* 30/32

3. The Written Attack on Idols.

When we refer to the written evidence for early

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[50] T.D. Barnes, *ibid*, 514-15.

[51] cf. n.5 above.

[52] The Armenian version of the *acta* calls Perennis Terentius but designates him correctly as prefect. The Greek version calls him by the right name but designates him incorrectly as proconsul of Asia, cf. T.D. Barnes, *art cit.*, *JRS* 58, 1968, 46, n. 169.

Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images it is necessary to define, as in the case of the imperial image, the kinds of visual images which Christian authors thought about and wrote about. For the first two centuries of the new religion, Christian authors directed their remarks about visual images mainly to that class of images which they judged to be idolatrous. If they knew or imagined that a given visual image, even an idol, could be viewed from its non-idolatrous aspect, then the authors in question did not bring this knowledge to their readers' attention. They limited their observations to idolatrous images alone. Only very occasionally during the first two centuries of Christianity was there any recognition in written form of the non-idolatrous character of some visual imagery.

We turn here from the early Christian discussion of the imperial image to the second class of images which occupied the attention of early Christian authors, namely images of the pagan pantheon. These were images which had been connected from time immemorial with popular paganism,[53] and because of their relative prominence and importance within popular piety, these images and the actions associated with them came under vigorous attack by Christian authors of the pre-Constantinian period, especially by the second century apologists.

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[53] How long paganism had included anthropomorphic representation is disputed. The Romans may have inherited the custom of representing deities in human form from the Etruscans. Varro's iconophobic tastes were expressed in the notion of a golden age which lasted for one hundred and seventy years from the founding of Rome by Romulus to the rule of Tarquinius Priscus. During this time the cult of the gods was aniconic. This notion which was known to Tertullian, Idol. 3/1/14ff. and to Augustine, is discussed in E. Bevan, Holy Images, London, 1940, 66; cf. K. Latte, Römische Religionsgeschichte, Munich, 1967^2, 150, n.2. On the

From a very early date Christian authors were critical of the presence of sacred images in the context of pagan religion. In general Christian authors construed this presence in the worst possible light. They ridiculed and satirized the beliefs and practices associated with popular paganism, pointing out the uselessness, worthlessness, helplessness, and lifelessness of the pagan sacred images, emphasizing that the images and the subjects which they represented had no real existence whatsoever, or alternately, that these images were the locus of demons and other evil spiritual creatures.[54] This well-known polemic, which occurs with a kind of predictable monotony throughout the literature,

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53 con't historical origins of the images of the Greek pantheon cf. M.P. Nilsson, Geschichte der Griechischen Religion I, Munich, 1967^3, 80ff.

[54] E. Bevan, op.cit., 90ff. emphasized the difference between the early Christian attack on pagan idols and the same Jewish attack in that the "Christians took much more seriously the pagan claim that the images were animated by spirits..." This argument is especially prominent in the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters of Athenagoras' Embassy and in the twenty-seventh chapter of Minucius Felix' Octavius.

especially the apologetic literature of the second and third centuries, is to be understood as a part of the general early Christian attack on popular religion. This is a theme which has attracted considerable attention among students of early Christian history and hence requires only brief discussion here.[55] However the brevity of the present discussion should not obscure the great importance of this theme for defining the terms and the limits of what we understand by early Christian attitudes toward visual images.

Christian authors borrowed the substance of their arguments against pagan images from pagan and Jewish prototypes. Christians modified the traditional topoi only slightly so that what Christians had to say about the sacred images of popular paganism resembled very closely what had been said by skeptics, prophets, and rationalists from the fifth century B.C.E. onwards.[56]

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[55] Cf. Chapter One n. 96.

[56] The manner in which Christian authors adapted Jewish arguments against idols was discussed by Bevan, op.cit., 84ff. His first point, that there was no blanket condemnation of all visual images in early Christianity as there had been in Judaism, is erroneous. I have discussed this at the end of this chapter. The classic Jewish sources relative to the anti-idol polemic include Psalm 115, Jeremiah, 10, Deutero-Isaiah 44, Book of Jubilees 12/1 ff., 20/7, the Letter of Jeremy, Bel and the Dragon, the Wisdom of Somomon 13/1-15/7, the Letter of Aristeas to his brother Philocrates, vss. 134-138. In a forthcoming publication, H. Attridge will argue that the letters of Pseudo Heraclitus, esp. epistles four and seven are pagan, and not Jewish, as is often assumed; cf. J. Bernays, Die herakleitischen Briefe, Berlin, 1869. I would like to thank Mr. Attridge for showing me his work in pre-published form.

As in the examples given above of Christian response to the imperial image, the earliest written evidence of a Christian confronting pagan sacred images is found in the New Testament, in the accounts of Paul's experiences in Athens and in Ephesus. In *Acts* 17/16ff. Luke reports that Paul's spirit was aroused within him when he saw the veritable forest of idols within the city of Athens.[57] On the sabbath Paul spoke with the Jews, and on the other days with whoever happened to be in the *agora*, 17/17. Like Socrates, Paul was accused of teaching a foreign religion. Certain unidentified Epicurean and Stoic philosophers led him before the council of the Areopagus to defend himself against the charge of introducing strange gods.[58] There, on the hill consecrated to Mars, before philosophers and council fathers, Paul preached his God, not incidentally a δαιμόνιον ξένον, but the very same god whom implicitly the Athenians had been worshipping all along although they were ignorant of his true identity.

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[57] E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Philadelphia, Pa., 1971, 515ff. (there the older bibliography). On κατείδωλος as 'forest of idols' cf. R. Wycherley, "St. Paul at Athens," *JThS*, N.S. 19, 1968, 619, 620.

[58] On the interpretation of vs. 19a, ἐπιλαβόμενοι τε αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἄρειον πάγον cf. T. Barnes, "An Apostle on Trial," *JThS*, N.S. 20, 1969, 407-19. Haenchen, *op.cit.*, minimizes the possibility of establishing a correspondence between history and the Lucan narrative. On the intended comparison between Socrates and Paul, cf. Haenchen, *op.cit.*

The Areopagus speech is a classic example in early Christian literature of *interpretatio christiana*, i.e., pagan belief reinterpreted and expounded in the light of Christian experience.

The external occasion for Paul's delivery of his speech was his discovery of an altar on the Areopagus, dedicated Ἀγνώστῳ θεῷ.[59] Luke does not provide the reader with a description of the altar in question, but the inscription on it provides the one basis that Paul needs to expatiate on the attributes, positive and negative, of his God. Positively, Paul's God is the maker of the world and everything in it including its human inhabitants, 17/24, 26. He is power unlimited, Lord of heaven and earth, source and sustainer of life for all living things. He has determined the periods and the limits of the natural life cycle, and he has done this in an orderly fashion so that the creature might perceive the nearness of the Creator, and indeed might perceive the true identity of the Creator through his workings in the creation, 17/26, 27.

Negatively, Paul's God does not dwell in temples made by human hands, is not served by human hands, needs nothing, is not like any material thing such as gold, silver, or stone (in contrast to the pagan deities who are known through their statues and images), and is not a product of human τέχνη or ἐνθύμησις, 17/24, 25, 29. Paul's primitive apophatic teaching in which divinity is portrayed as beyond and outside of the limits of all contingency is combined here with a kind of immanentism οὐ μακρὰν απὸ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου ἡμῶν... 17/27. He is not far from us and we live and move and have our being in him, 17/28. Paul's teaching would have fallen on deaf ears had he been teaching in the agora among uneducated commoners, but Paul's teaching had a familiar ring to the council oligarchs and philosophers who gathered to hear him. His teaching contained elements of their own philosophical tradition.

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[59] R. Wycherley, *art. cit.*, 620, 621, has suggested that the origin of the cult dedicated to a nameless deity may have been related to the discovery of an older burial ground, possibly a "Mycenaean-type chamber tomb...such tombs were accidentally disturbed from time to time, in levelling the ground or in building operations..." Otherwise cf. Haenchen, *op.cit*.

Paul directs his words to an educated audience. But in criticizing pagan religion Paul focuses on what historians of religion call 'niedere Glaube,' or popular superstition, the identification or near identification of divinity with some material object, a *res sacra*, as in vs. 17/29.[60] This is the same level of religion which is represented and satirized in Lucian's *Philopseudes*. Thus Paul speaks to the educated and the powerful, but criticizes the superstitions of the lower classes. Virtually all of the subsequent Christian attack on pagan idols and idol worship, at least during the pre-Constantinian period, follows the model found in Paul's Areopagus speech; it is a polemic addressed to the educated and the powerful and it is in opposition to 'niedere Glaube.' The model is complicated, however, by the well-known fact that for the religious history of late antiquity superstition and magic are not just the idiosyncracies of the poor and the uneducated but flourish as well among philosophers, among the educated, the rich, and the powerful classes.[61]

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[60] M. Nilsson, *op.cit.* II, Munich, 1961, 520ff., and A. Dieterich, *Kleine Schriften*, Leipzig, 1911, 449ff. ("Der Untergang der antiken Religion"), esp. 511-525 ("Die religiöse Erregung der Massen").

The circumstances of Paul's sojourn in Ephesus, as related in Acts 19/23ff., were similar to those in Athens. Paul was in trouble in Ephesus as well. This time the external occasion for Paul's teaching concerned the local fabrication of small devotional objects, ναοί ἀργύροι consecrated or dedicated to Μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις, the patroness of the Ephesians.

All that we learn of Paul's teaching in Ephesus is contained in the statement, οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι 19/26. We can fill in the rest of this teaching from the Areopagus speech or from Rom. 1/19ff.[62] Paul spoke out not only against Artemis and the myth which she embodied, but also against the sacred idols dedicated to her. It is difficult to reconstruct the kernel of historical truth which is contained in the account of Paul's experiences in Ephesus. It does appear that Paul's teaching met with some success, that he challenged the sacred aetiology of the city, and thereby undercut the economic stability of the craftsmen engaged in the production of devotional objects dedicated to Artemis. The uproar which ensued was considerable.[63]

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[61] A. Dieterich, op.cit., 511-525.

[62] For the exegesis of Romans I/19ff. cf. O. Michel, op.cit.

The teachings contained in these two passages which concern Paul's encounters with paganism and with pagan images are echoed in various ways throughout the other writings of the New Testament. In I *Cor*. 8/4, *Gal*. 4/8, the image, understood as an idol, is portrayed as having no real existence; in I *Cor*. 12/2 the image is described as dumb while in *Rev*. 9/20 emphasis is laid upon the fact that the images of the gods cannot walk or hear or talk. In I *Cor*. 10/19 the real existence of the image and its subject is taken seriously and is construed, as Bevan emphasized, as a locus of power, in this case, demonic power.[64] False and lifeless images, made by human hands and housed in man's temples are then contrasted with the one God of the Christians, I *Cor*. 8/6, the true and living God, I *Thess*. 1/19, the God who is not bound in any way by circumstances of contingency, who does not live in houses made by human hands, *Acts* 7/48, who is spirit, *Jn*. 4/24, and who is immortal and invisible, I *Tim*. 6/15, 16, *Rom*. 1/20, *Heb*. 11/27, I *Tim*. 1/17, *Col*. 1/15, *Acts* 17/29, *Jn*. 1/18.

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[63] E. Haenchen, *op.cit.*, 570ff.

[64] E. Bevan, *op.cit.*, 90ff.

Beyond the New Testament the traditional attack on pagan idols was continued within the literary context of Christian apology. Occasionally elements of this polemic occur in a non-apologetic context, but the true literary context of this polemic is apology.[65]

The earliest appearance of this polemic after the examples from the New Testament is found in the *Kerygma*

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[65] The literary *topos* against images and idols occurs infrequently in martyrological and apocalyptic writings and is also found, as remarked by Koch, *op.cit*., 12, 13, in church orders. The same *topos* is present in the story of Lycomedes and John, preserved in the *Acts of John*, chapters 26-29, of the Greek version. For having commissioned his friend, a skilled artist, ζωγράφος, to execute an image of the apostle, Lycomedes was rebuked by John for living, ἔτι ἐθνικῶς . For the Greek text, cf. *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* II/1, (hrsg. C. Tischendorf, R.A. Lipsius, M. Bonnet) Darmstadt, 1959, 151ff. For other editions of these *Acta* together with an English trans., cf. *HS* II. 188ff. The date and the provenance of the *Acta Ioannis* are uncertain. The earliest external witness is still Eusebius, *HE* III/25/6. As a written composition there is no compelling reason to assume a date for the *Acta* earlier than the third century, although oral traditions associated with John were known to Clement and Origen, cf. *HS* II, 80ff. The remarks made by Andre Grabar in his *Christian Iconography*, Princeton, N.J. 1968, 66, 67, 84, 85, disregard the historical uncertainties of the *Acta Ioannis* and must therefore be discounted.

Petrou, a document preserved to us in fragmentary form only and perhaps written in Egypt before the middle of the second century.[66] In the fragments of the Kerygma Petrou, preserved for us by Clement, we find a combination of two elements which were characteristic of later Greek and Latin apology and which had already been present in primitive form in Paul's missionary preaching, namely defense of Christianity combined with a refutation of paganism. The Kerygma Petrou catalogues in expanded form the attributes of the Christian God:

εἷς θεός ἐστιν ὃς αρχὴν πάντων ἐποίησεν
καὶ τέλους ἐξουσιάν ἔχων . . .
ὁ ἀόρατος ὃς τὰ πάντα ὁρᾷ, ἀχώρητος
ὃς τὰ πάντα χωρεῖ, ἀνεπιδεὴς οὗ τὰ πάντα
ἐπιδέεται καὶ δι᾽ ὅν εστιν. ἀκατάληπτος,
ἀέναος, ἄφθαρτος, ἀποίητος ὃς τὰ πάντα
ἐποίησεν . . ,[67]

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[66] The KP marks the transition between early missionary preaching and apology. One of its more obvious differences from apology is that the addressees are clearly Chrstian. The Greek fragments of the KP are collected in E. Klostermann, "Reste des Petrusevangeliums, des Petrusapokalypse und des Kerygma Petri," Kleine Texte für theologische und philologische Vorlesungen und Übungen 3, Bonn, 1908², 12-16; for Eng. translation and commentary cf. HS II, 94ff.

[67] Klostermann, op.cit., from Clement of Alexandria, Stromata VI/5/39-41 (Stahlin edition, vol. II, p. 451, 452, line 4ff.)

Reminiscent of the Areopagus speech the Kerygma Petrou urges that the God of the Greeks is identical with the God whom the Christians worship. The Greeks however do not know this God perfectly as do the Christians. This fault in their cognitive or intellectual faculties leads the Greeks to an erroneous form of worship. They become unable to distinguish clearly between creator and creation, between God and the things which God has given them for their practical use: hence the genesis of idol worship among the Greeks, and animal worship among the Egyptians.[68]

Aristides' Apology, probably composed under the rule of Antoninus Pius and addressed to him,[69] contains three passages in the Greek original, 3/1, 2, 7/4, 13/1, 2, and one in Syriac translation, 15/5, which rehearse traditional arguments against pagan images of the gods. We learn that the Chaldaeans enclosed images of their divinities within their temples and worshipped them, calling them gods, even though they were forced to guard them against theft, 3/2ff. In this they failed to perceive that the guard is greater than the thing guarded just as the maker is greater than the thing made. How indeed, asks Aristides, can gods who need protection protect others?, 13/2. In worshipping τὰ φθαρτὰ στοιχεῖα καὶ τὰ νεκρὰ ἀγάλματα . . . τὰ κωφὰ καὶ ἀναίσθητα εἴδωλα . . . 7/4, 13/1, the pagans commit a grave error. In fact the pagan peoples are able to watch their divinities being fabricated and subsequently observe their gradual deterioration through time, but even this does not mitigate their belief in them as deities, 13/2.

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[68] HS II, 100, n.1.

[69] Of the earliest known Christian apology, addressed to the emperor Hadrian by Quadratus, only one sentence survives, Eusebius, HE IV/3/1ff. R.M. Grant, "The Chronology of the Greek Apologists," VC 9, 1955, 25; J. Geffcken, Zwei Griechische Apologeten, Leipzig, 1907, 4ff. (Gk. text); G. Ruhbach, Altkirchliche Apologeten, Gütersloh, 1966, 9ff. (bibliography).

Throughout his *Apology* addressed to Antoninus Pius but especially in the ninth chapter, Justin Martyr continues the polemic against idols.[70] Justin introduces a theme known from Herodotus, namely that the materials used to represent the pagan deities are frequently inappropriate to the subject matter represented. He emphasizes in the case of the Christian deity the impossibility of reducing a God ὃς ἄρρητον δόξαν καὶ μορφὴν ἔχων to conditions of contingency and corruptibility, 9/3. At the end of chapter nine Justin also calls into question the moral qualities, or lack of these, embodied in the lives of the craftsmen who executed the images of the gods. Beyond this Justin adds very little new material to the discussion of pagan images. Justin's pupil, Tatian, adds nothing to the stock exempla concerning pagan images contained especially in the fourth chapter of his Oratio ad Graecos. Tatian is best known for his testimony, of uncertain authenticity, concerning the iconography of certain works of art which he claimed to know first-hand.[71]

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[70] For the date of the first Apology, 146-161, and its sequel, or supplement, 146-160, cf. R.M. Grant, *art.cit.*, 26. E. Goodspeed, *Die ältesten Apologeten*, Gottingen, 1914, 24ff. (Gk. text). B. Altaner, A. Stuiber, *op.cit.*, 66ff. Other chapters of the Apology which contain *traditional exempla* against idols are 20, 24, 26, 27, 55, 56, 60, 62, 64, and in the *Dialogue with Trypho*, chapters 90, 94, 112, 113, 114.

The numerous other apologetic writings of the period do not add significantly to this repertory of arguments against images which we have seen outlined in brief form in the preceding paragraphs. The literary topos against images and idols appears variously in Athenagoras' Apology to Marcus Aurelius and Commodus,[72] in Theophilus' defense of Christianity to his friend Autolycus,[73] in the third century pseudo-Cyprianic Quod idola non dii sint,[74] in

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[71] On the date of Tatian's Oration, ca. 177, cf. Grant, art.cit., 28. E. Goodspeed, op.cit., 266ff. (Gk. text); on the catalogue of art works mentioned in chapters 33 and 34 and presumed to have been seen by Tatian, cf. A. Kalkmann, "Tatians Nachrichten über Kunstwerke, RhM, N.F. 42, 1887, 489-524; R.C. Kukula, Alterwbeweis und Künstlerkatalog in Tatians Rede an die Griechen, Vienna, 1900; H. Puech, Recherches sur le Discours aux Grecs de Tatien, Paris, 1903, 47ff.

[72] E. Goodspeed, op.cit., 314ff. (Gk. text), esp. chapters 4, 6-8, 15, 18, 20, 23, 26-28. R. Grant, art.cit., 28, 29.

[73] Theophilus of Antioch, Ad Autolycum (ed. R.M. Grant), Oxford, 1970 (text and trans.).

[74] B. Altaner, A. Stuiber, op.cit., 174, 175.

Minucius Felix' Octavius,[75] in the letter of unknown authorship to Ti. Claudius Diognetus,[76] in pseudo-Justin's Cohortatio ad Graecos,[77] and throughout the writings of Tertullian and Clement. In a word, the topos against images was popular among Christian authors of the second and third century. They made extensive use of this topos especially within the apologetic creations of the day, and knowledge of this fact leads us to question the role and function of the topos within Christian apology.

The addressee of Christian apology was normally the emperor. In the ideal conception of the universe it was he who embodied justice and cared for his subjects. In theory at least, he was accessible to each and every one of his subjects.[78] While the apologists intended for their writings to be read by a larger audience, they also hoped that a redress of their grievances would issue directly from the emperor.

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[75] Cf. n. 8.

[76] Ti. Claudius Diognetus was an imperial procurator in Egypt and the letter written to him by an unknown author appears to have been composed during a severe persecution in the early third century, possibly in 204, under the reign of Septimius Severus; cf. H.I. Marrou, A Diognète, Paris, 1965.

[77] B. Altaner, A. Stuiber, op.cit., 68.

[78] For a helpful discussion of this aspect of apology cf. T. D. Barnes, Tertullian, Oxford, 1971, 102ff. Miltiades in his lost Apology, HE V/17/5,was the first Christian author who addressed an apology not to the emperor but the provincial governors. Tatian's diatribe was not addressed to the emperor but was also intended for a larger audience.

Broadly conceived, Christian apology was composed of two elements, namely the defense of Christianity and the refutation of paganism.[79] The Christian apologists hoped to achieve certain clear and tangible goals with their writings. The older view which held that Christian apology was just a literary exercise devoid of practical intention can not be supported today.[80] The most immediate objective of Christian apology was to win legal recognition for the new religion, and with it, the social acceptance which would accrue from such recognition.

In their portrayal of paganism the apologists focussed on its mythic irrationalities, immoralities, and inconsistencies, and on its cultic superstitions. The attack was directed at the 'niedere Glaube,' not at the philosophers' religion. In illustrating paganism's cultic superstitions the topos against images played an important role. People who placed their trust in lifeless statues and images were clearly fools. The apologists never tired of repeating this standard Euhemeristic, rationalist critique of popular religion.

By contrast the apologists portrayed their own religion as a well thought-out system of enlightened beliefs and actions. They emphasized the rational and reasonable character of Christianity, that it was a religion truly supportive of the commonweal, that it was a higher purified religion devoid of the vulgar excesses which characterized the superstitious beliefs of the people. If there was any distortion of the truth (which there was) in the matter of images then it was to overstate the aniconic character of the new religion. No commentator on Christian apology, to my knowledge, has noted the fundamental connection between this overstatement and the central goal of this literary effort, viz., legal and social enfranchisement for Christianity.

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[79] The components of Christian apology are analyzed in detail in M. Pellegrino, Studi su l'antica apologetica, Rome, 1947.

[80] M. Pellegrino, op.cit., lff., and V. Monachino, "Intento pratico e propagandistico nell apolgetica greca del II secolo," Gregorianum 32, 1951, 5-49, 187-222.

Although the mood of Christian apology, especially Latin Christian apology, cannot be called exactly conciliatory, it is always supportive of the emperor and the imperium. There is no mention in all of the lengthy diatribe against images of the one fact which must have exercised everyone's attention, certainly the emperor's, by the time of the writing of the first Christian apology in 124 or 125, HE IV 3/2. I refer to the fact that Christians were known to be obstinate in their refusal to worship the imperial image. Their refusal to do so could only intensify the suspicion that they were a seditious sect. The whole point of Christian apology was of course to emphasize just the opposite, that is, that Christians were to the world what the sould is to the body, as the author of the Epistle to Diognetus, 6/1 expressed it, or in Melito's words, HE IV/26/7, that the Roman empire became great and splendid with the advent of the new religion.

The rebuttal to the pagan accusation that Christians were atheistic or otherwise seditiously sectarian was in fact contained implicitly within the literary topos against images and the consequent portrayal of Christianity as an aniconic religion which emerged from this topos (sic Celsus).[81] Christians do not worship any images. They cannot, because of the very nature of their deity who alone is worthy of worship, who is transcedent, and who cannot be reduced to the conditions of materiality requisite for the making of an image. It follows from this, although the apologists carefully avoid mentioning it, *expressis verbis*, that Christians cannot worship the image of the emperor. Christians would have the emperor understand that their reasons for refusing to honor him in this manner have nothing to do with political sedition; the implication of Christian apology is surely that the reason for Christian refusal was religious, not political.

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[81] Origen's reply to Celsus, composed as Eusebius tells us, HE VI/36/2 under Philip the Arabian, builds upon the apologetic tradition of Justin, Tatian, Theophilus, Athenagoras, and Clement. Origen's apology resumes all of the arguments against pagan religion and, as a prominent feature of this religion, against the images of the pantheon. Images are discussed throughout the Contra Celsum but especially in the last nine chapters of the seventh book. There the discussion is initiated by Celsus' contention that Christians are iconophobes and cannot bear to see temples, altars, or images, that they fail to perceive the symbolic character of pagan sacred images, and that in dishonoring the images they reveal their own impiousness and lawlessness. Origen counters Celsus' attack with many different arguments, among them an appeal to the literal meaning of Exodus 20/4; cf. H. Chadwick, Origen: Contra Celsum, Cambridge, 1965 (Eng. trans., bibliography, and brief commentary, inc. discussion of the critical edition by Koetschau).

We come to the end of this section concerned with the Christian employment of the literary *topos* against idols and images. Here, as in the preceding section which was concerned with the Christian response to the imperial image, we have focussed exclusively on Christian attitudes expressed toward a particular category of image. These were images which the authors under review judged to be idolatrous. For at least the first two centuries of Christianity, attitudes toward visual images and arts as evidenced in the extant Christian written remains meant mostly that: attitudes toward idolatrous images. We turn now to the few exceptions, that is, to authors who expressed an awareness of other types of images or who, even in the matter of idolatrous images, were aware that the idolatrous aspect of an image did not exhaust its entire meaning.

4. Tertullian and Clement.

Tertullian had more to say on the subject of visual arts and images than any other Christian author of the pre-Constantinian period. In itself this is not remarkable; Tertullian, after all, had a great deal to say on many subjects. But it is remarkable that his sustained interest in this subject, indeed his preoccupation with the matter of visual images, has attracted so little attention among students of Tertullian. Brief discussions of Tertullian's thoughts on the subject of visual images can be found in the numerous studies devoted to the early Christian "Bilderfrage" and to related issues.[82] But there is no separate study devoted to Tertullian alone. This is not an omission which I can correct within the limitations of the present chapter. At the very least, a critical commentary to his important *de Idololatria* is called for before any definitive study of Tertullian's attitudes toward visual arts and images is possible. All that I can offer here are preliminary observations. My objective here is to demonstrate the complexity of Tertullian's thoughts on the subject of visual images and arts and thereby to express my conviction that his attitudes on this matter cannot be legitimately reduced to a simple rule or precept.

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[82] J.C.W. Augusti, *Beiträge zur christlichen Kunst-Geschichte und Liturgik* I, Leipzig, 1841, 109ff.; Charles Guignebert, *Tertullian. Étude sur ses sentiments a l'égard de l'empire et de la société civile.* Paris, 1901, 448-68; H. Koch, *op.cit.*, 3ff.; E. Bevan, *op.cit.*, passim.

In commenting on Porphyry's letter to Marcella, E. Bevan urged that we, his readers:

> "be cautious, in the case of Christian writers, how we take the language expressing a relative depreciation of visible symbols in worship to mean an absolute repudiation of visible symbols."[83]

Previous to the examples given from Porphyry's letter Bevan had argued that there was no:

> "clear statement in an early Christian Father that it is wrong to make the image or picture of any class of objects...(no) explicit statement that it is wrong for Christians to make pictures or images of anything or of the persons whom they regard with religious reverence, or of the Lord Jesus in particular."[84]

Bevan emphasized this distinction throughout his book, viz. the distinction between the relative depreciation of a certain class of images (i.e., idolatrous images) and the absolute repudiation of all images. Even in Judaism there had been no absolute repudiation of all images, claimed Bevan, although this was the literal meaning of the Mosaic injunction in its expanded form as Bevan himself readily admitted.[85] In setting forth the view that early Christian literature contained no evidence for the blanket prohibition of all images, irrespective of circumstance, Bevan was echoing an opinion which had been held (curiously) a generation earlier by Hugo Koch,[86] and at the turn of the century by Charles Guignebert.[87] In each case this view had been offered as a commentary on Tertullian's writings. It is a view, in my opinion, manifestly in contradiction to the literal meaning of Tertullians own words, and hence requires consideration here.

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[83] E. Bevan, op.cit., 109.

[84] ibid., 85, 104; cf. 89, 102.

[85] ibid., 47.

Tertullian's *De Idololatria* is the second of his three earliest writings. The *De Spectaculis* was his earliest writing, to which *Idol*. 13/1/7ff. refers. The third of the early trio was the second book of the *De Cultu Feminarum*. It was shown in 1910 by R. Heinze and again emphasized in 1971 by T. Barnes that *Idol*. 15/11/13ff. contains the explanation of *Apol*. 35/4/13-18, and hence that the latter presupposes the former. The *Apologeticum* was composed after the defeat of Clodius Albinus in Lugdunum in February of 197. How long after this date is uncertain, but probably during the autumn of 197 or slightly later.[88] *Idol*. may be dated therefore to

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[86] H. Koch, *op.cit.*, 3. Koch opposed the (correct) interpretation of *Augusti*, *op.cit.*, 110, who in commenting on *Idol.* 3 suggested: "Nach ihm (Tertullian) ist jede Kunst nichts anderes als ein verruchter Götzendienst!"

[87] C. Guignebert, *op.cit.*, 456 (mais il ne va pas jusqu'à les proscrire en principe), 457 (il ne serait pas radicalement ennemi d'un art sacré), 460 (Tertullian ne proscrit pas l'art en soi...)

[88] T.D. Barnes, *op.cit.*, 35, 53, 54, n.2. The Latin text of Tertullian used here is *Q.S.F. Tertulliani Opera* I, II, Turnholt, 1954 (*Corpus Christianorum*, *Series Latina*, I, II).

196 or early 197. The efforts of Monceaux and others to assign *Idol.* to Tertullian's Montanist period must be judged a failure.[89]

Idol. contains four passages whose literal meaning amounts to an incontrovertible and unqualified repudiation of all visual images. The context in which these passages occur does not modify the literal meaning of these passages in any significant manner. The passages are:

> *Idol.* 3/2/19ff., At ubi artifices statuarum et imaginum et omnis generis simulacrorum diabolus saeculo intulit,...(cf. *Spect.* 10/10/36ff.
>
> *Idol.* 3/4/30ff., Εἶδος Graece formam sonat; ab eo per diminutionem εἴδωλον deductum; aeque apud nos forma formulam fecit. Igitur omnis forma vel formula idolum se dici exposcit.
>
> *Idol.* 4/1/9ff., Propter hanc causam, ad eradicandam scilicet materiam idololatriae, lex divina proclamat, ne feceris idolum, et coniungens, neque similitudinem eorum quae in caelo sunt et quae in terra et quae in mari, toto mundo eiusmodi artibus interdixit servis dei...(cf. *Idol.* 5/4/16ff., *Marc.* II/22/1/23ff.)
>
> *Idol.* 8/1/25-27 and 8/3/12-14,
> Sunt et aliae conplurimum artium species, quae, etsi non contingunt idolorum fabricationem, tamen ea, sine quibus idola, nil possunt, eodem crimine expediunt... Nulla ars non alterius artis aut mater aut propinqua est. Nihil alterius vacat. Tot sunt artium venae quot hominum concupiscentiae...

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[89] P. Monceaux, *Histoire Littéraire de l'Afrique Chrétienne* I, Paris, 1901, 206; B. Altaner, A. Stuiber, *op.cit.*, 158.

After having established the deceptive ubiquity of idolatry and its cancerous latitudo in chapters one and two of Idol. Tertullian opens chapter three with a well known theme culled from M. Terentius Varro: Idolum aliquamdiu retro non erat.[90] Tertullian compares the glory of the former golden age with its pristine aniconism to the idolatrous corruptions of the present era. He maintains that it was the devil who introduced into the present saeculum sculptors, painters, and the craftsmen who make all kinds of (other) representations. There can be no mistaking Tertullian at this point. He does not restrict his observations just to the fabrication of idolatrous images but instead expressly derives "artifices...omnis generis simulacrorum" from a Satanic origin.[91]

The sequence of Tertullian's thought in setting forth his linguistic equation, Idol. 3/4/30ff., is unclear. The Greek Εἶδος is clearly the given, and from it Tertullian incorrectly derives forma. He then proposes, incorrectly, that the diminutive of *it*, whether εἶδος or *forma* is not entirely clear, is εἴδωλον. *Formula* he derives correctly from *forma*. But the ambiguity of his thought sequence and his defective etymologies do not affect in the least the outcome of his equation: every *forma* or *formula* demands to be called an idol. Tertullian believes that *forma* and *idolum* are related linguistically, and this for him is proof positive that there can be no *forma* which is free from the condition of idolatry.[92]

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[90] For Tertullian's use of Varro's lost books on Roman religion, cf. T.D. Barnes, op.cit., 196ff. and E. Bevan, op.cit., 66, 67, for a discussion of the Varronian idea that during the first 170 years of its history, from Romulus to Tarquinius Priscus, Rome had no representations of the gods in visible form.

[91] In Spect. 10/10/36ff. esp. lines 45-49 Tertullian argues that demons gave to ment the capacities necessary for the cultivation of the dramatic arts.

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[92] J. Waszink, *Mnemosyne* 3/3/2, 1936, 171, 172 has argued that Tertullian derived forma and εἴδωλον from εἶδος and in turn formula from εἴδωλον, thus:

$$\begin{tikzcd} \text{εἶδος} \arrow[r, dash, dashed] \arrow[d] & \text{forma} & & \text{εἶδος} \arrow[r, dash, dashed] \arrow[d] & \text{forma} \arrow[d] \\ \text{εἴδωλον} \arrow[r, dashed] & \text{formula} & \text{instead of} & \text{εἴδωλον} \arrow[r, dash, dashed] & \text{formula} \end{tikzcd}$$

In composing many of his treatises, Tertullian was guided by the rhetorical theory of argument which was popular during the Second Sophistic Movement of the second century; we know the details of this theory from such representative sources as Cicero and Quintilian. In fact Tertullian's treatment of our subject was shaped in important ways by rhetorical principles, although this aspect of the problem has never been explored. Nowhere is this more evident than in the *Idol*. where Definition, understood both as *stasis* and formal *topos*, plays the determinative role in the unfolding of the argument. In his *Ancient Rhetoric and the Art of Tertullian*, London, 1971, 101ff., R.S. Sider writes of *Idol*., "Here Tertullian deliberately establishes at the beginning of his argument a definition which will include the entire range of 'criminal acts' which he wishes to attack. Accordingly, he devotes the whole of chapters 2 and 3 to a prejudicial definition of idolatry, while in the rest of the work he has only to show systematically how the deeds involved in the various activities which he impugns are all condemned by the definition originally established."

Koch argued that, from the outset of *Idol.* 3/4/30ff., Tertullian was referring only to idolatrous images.[93] But this makes only very limited sense. Tertullian's objective here is to show that it is because of their commonly and universally agreed meaning, and not in spite of this meaning, that these two words, Εἶδος and *forma*, (and the realities to which they point) participate by definition in the condition of idolatry. He begins his equation therefore by setting them forth in their commonly accepted meanings, and only in conclusion does he suggest the inherent etymological (and hence real) relationship between *forma* and *idolum*.

In *Idol*. 4/1/9ff., Tertullian urges that the objective of the Mosaic injunction against images was the extirpation of the *materiam idololatriae*, which I understand to mean the material causes of idolatry, or the total conditions requisite and conducive to the creation of idolatry. Tertullian tells us, *Idol*. 3/3/26ff., that idolatry can subsist without dependence on external props such as idols. Idolatry for Tertullian is a spiritual sin and it is *sui generis*, *Idol*. 2/1/16ff. It manifests itself in a plenitude of other sins and crimes without reducing itself simply to any one of its manifestations. It generates, nourishes, and embraces all manner of sinfulness. It is richly supplied, *Idol*. 2/1/18, for its mission of destruction. The breadth and expansiveness of idolatry ruin even the servants of God, Idol. 2/1/21, 22. Idolatry, in Tertullian's mind, is like a subtle cancer which reaches out under infinite guises to claim its victims, and hence Tertullian is continually vigilant in his effort to diagnose the presence of idolatry and root out its causes.

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[93] H. Koch, *op.cit.*, 4.

After reciting the Mosaic injunction in its expanded form, which forbids indiscriminately all image making, Tertullian emphasizes the point: toto mundo eiusmodi artibus interdixit servis dei... To be sure, Tertullian construes the objective of the Mosaic injunction to be the eradication of idolatry, but this in no way modifies the force of the injunction itself. To the contrary, representational arts "of this kind" are judged indeed to be the material causes of idolatry!

The purpose of chapter eight is to adumbrate once again the supporting theme of the entire treatise, viz., idololatriae latitudo. Tertullian writes that there are other types of the several arts which do not touch directly upon the fabrication of idols but which create nevertheless the conditions without which idols could not exist. In other words these arts create the idololatriae materiam. In part Tertullian's objective here is to explain to the craftsman convert how he can continue in his craft without incurring the guilt of idolatry. But Tertullian cannot forbear to emphasize that all arts are interrelated and interdependent, that this network of dependencies is analogous to man's fallen state of concupiscence, and hence, we may conclude, that all arts are implicated by their several natures in the production and maintenance of idolatry.

One cannot read Idol. or, mutatis mutandis, Spect. without the feeling that what Tertullian really meant was that the world would have been a much better place without its artists, its craftsmen, and their productions.[94] Life would have been to be sure primitive, but thus so much the freer from its current obsession with materials, the adjuncts of idolatry. Tertullian's insight resembles Paul's, Rom. I/18ff., namely that the material universe obscures man's proper appreciation of divinity. Preeminently obscurantist in this framework are visual arts and images, in Tertullian's judgement and in Paul's. The foregoing examples from Tertullian's Idol., with parallels from his other writings, indiciate that he was capable of condemning unequivocably all visual arts and images irrespective of extenuating circumstances.

But the full range of Tertullian's thoughts on the subject of visual images is by no means exhausted in these few passages reflecting a strictly condemnatory attitude vis à vis all images. In fact Tertullian interrupted his otherwise singleminded diatribe against idolatry by introducing a Marcionite complication. Certain Marcionites had asked, claims Tertullian, why, given the prohibition of all images, had God commanded Moses in the desert to make the brazen image of a serpent?, Idol. 5/3/1, 2. Tertullian's response to this question is instructive from more than one point of view.[95]

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[94] Cf. Cult. I/8/2/6: "Non placet deo quod non ipse produxit."

In at least two other passages within his writings, Adversus Marcionem II/22/1/23ff. and III/13/7/21ff., Tertullian counters this question and the implication which it contains.[96] But only in Idol. does he explain its full significance, namely that the "adversarii legis," the Marcionites, understanding the supposedly binding significance of the Decalogue, had

[95] Initially the subject of this chapter is ecclesiological and concerns the admittance of craftsmen to the church. Tertullian regards those who make idols as equally guilty with those who worship them, 5/1, 13-15. But he recognizes that craftsmen must make a living and with qualifications accepts the precept (I Thess. 4/11) that it is laudable to support oneself by the work of one's own hands, 5/2/22ff. Tertullian excludes from the category of legitimate work the bath thieves (fures balneares), the other thieves (latrones), the forgers (falsarii), and the actors (histriones), together with those who work in the artes, i.e., "artium quas dei disciplina non recipit." The literal meaning of the protasis in the clause 5/3/1, 2, makes no sense in the present context: "si nulla exceptio est... and illustrates the need for a critical commentary of Idol. It is possible that it should read "sin ulla exceptio?" This would change the meaning to fit the context.

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[96] On the date and composition of the adversus Marcionem, cf. T.D. Barnes, op.cit., 255-256.

imputed inconstancy to a God who could change his mind and command his servant, Moses, to contravene the lex divina. In one instance he forbids the making of all images, and in the next he commands just the opposite. What indeed are we to make of the professed unchangeable nature of such a divinity?

> Alioquin si haec ut adversarii legis interpretemur, numquid et nos, quod et Marcionitae, inconstantiam adscribimus omnipotenti, quem illi hoc modo destruunt ut mutabilem, dum alibi vetat, alibi mandat? Idol. 5/3/6ff.

Tertullian defends not only Yahweh's command to Moses to execute an image, described in Numbers 21/6-9, but more importantly he justifies the image itself on its own grounds.

In defending Yahweh's command to execute an image, which clearly contradicts the law given to Moses on Sinai, Tertullian appeals to the notion of an "extraordinary precept." God issued this precept only once, and while it was in effect it annulled and abrogated the binding force of the Mosaic injunction against images. But this was extraordinary, and men are not to construe that extraordinary precept as having any efficacy in the present. Men are to follow the Mosaic law unless God issues another extraordinary precept, Idol. 5/4/16ff.

But more important for our purposes is Tertullian's justification of the image made by Moses on its own grounds.

The basis of this justification lies in the distinction, clearly perceived by Tertullian, between the symbolic character of an image and its idolatrous nature. Yahweh had commanded Moses to make a fiery serpent and put it on a pole so that those Israelites who looked upon it would be healed, *Numbers* 21/8. Tertullian disregards the original context and literal meaning of this apotropaic device and instead submits the entire passage to typological exegesis. The serpent affixed to the pole becomes thereby a type of the Lord affixed to his cross.[97]

While Tertullian makes it perfectly clear to his readers that he does not commend the making of images unless they, like Moses, receive an extraordinary precept from God, he makes equally clear the real difference between symbol and idol. There is even a precedent, to which Tertullian points, within sacred history for God's having commanded the fabrication of a proleptically symbolic image. Though this precedent is not to be construed as an invitation to image-making, Tertullian leaves unanswered the possibility of a further command from God.

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[97] In the first line of the eighteenth chapter of his *Embassy* Athenagoras distinguishes between the gods and their images which are symbolic of the former. The typological explanation of the brazen serpent as a figure of the cross was known to Justin as is evidenced in his *Apology*, chapter 50. This interpretation was in fact part of ancient Christian tradition as is shown in the Gospel of John 3/4; cf. *The Anchor Bible 29*, *The Gospel According to John 1-12* (trans., intro., notes by R. Brown), Garden City, 1966, 133; cf. the *Epistle of Barnabas*, 12/5-7.

But most importantly, Tertullian chooses to qualify the seemingly inexorable *Tendenz* of his diatribe at this point. Why introduce this complication here? If we disregard the passage then it may be legitimately maintained as we saw above p.162ff. that the object of *Idol.* was to dismiss out of hand all images and all image makers, to establish, that is, the *a priori* connection between any visual image and idolatry. But the latter half of chapter five complicates that putative connection hopelessly. It is tempting, although finally frustrating because of our lack of reliable information, to try to connect Tertullian's distinction between symbolic and idolatrous images with the material remains of Carthaginian Christianity contemporary with the writing of *Idol.*[98]

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[98] The most important early Christian material remains from Carthage are inscriptions for which, however, there is no reliable chronology. Many of these inscriptions bear the same proto-Christian signs and symbols that appear on the inscriptions of early Christian Rome; cf. J.B. Ferron, "Carthage," *DHGE* 9, 1149-1233. On the symbols which appear in a North African context cf. *CIL* VIII/ Supplement V/2, 1955, 240 ("Anaglypha cristiana"). It is frequently assumed that Christianity in North Africa developed out of Judaism and that, in Carthage, Christians were originally buried together with Jews in the necropolis north of the city at Gammarth (Gamart). This is very improbable however, cf. T.D. Barnes, *op.cit.*, 273-76.

In Marc. II/22/1/26ff., Tertullian defends God's command to Moses to execute an image on the grounds that the object of the command was to heal the Israelites and had nothing to do with idolatry:

> Serpentis autem aenei effigies postea praecepta Moysi a domino non ad idolatriae titulum pertinebat, sed ad remediandos eos, qui a serpentibus infestabantur.

Unlike the sequences in the last half of the fifth chapter and in Marc. III/18/7/21ff., here Tertullian declines to comment on the symbolic typology of the cross which the image of thesnake bore, "taceo de figura remedii." Marc. III/22/1/4.

But in order to adumbrate further the distinction between symbol and idol Tertullian continues his discussion by introducing, as examples of legitimate visual representations, the images of the Cherubim and Seraphim, known from Exod. 25/18-20, 37/6-9, Numbers 7/89, I Sam. 4/4, I Kings 6/23-28, 8/6-7:

> Sic et Cherubin et Seraphin aurea in arcae figuratum exemplum; certe simplex ornamentum. Adcommodata suggestui, longe diversas habendo causas ab idolatriae condicione, ob quam similitudo prohibetur, non videntur similitudinem prohibitarum legi refragari, non in eo similitudinis statu deprehensa, ob quem similitudo prohibetur. Marc. II/22/2/6ff.

For Tertullian the golden theriomorphs are purely ornamental, utterly devoid of any relationship to idolatry.[99] Idolatry be it noted is the reason for the prohibition against image making, "ob quam similitudo prohibetur,". But the images of the Cherubim and the Seraphim do not appear to contravene the meaning of the Mosaic injunction because they are not the kind of images to which the law refers, that is, they are not idolatrous images. At this point Tertullian is even willing to change the literal meaning of Exod. 20/4 in order to establish the distinction, essential to his argument, between symbol and idol.

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[99] Clement, Stromata 5/36/44 spiritualizes these images as an allegory of the soul and hence calls into question their existence as actual images.

There are numerous other passages in Tertullian's writings which one could adduce in order to illustrate his ambiguity in the matter of visual arts and images.[100] Probably none illustrates so dramatically as does Marc. II/22/1/26ff. the well known fact that Tertullian was an occasional writer.[101] When provoked, he wrote. And when he wrote, he wrote not just to convince but if possible to overwhelm his opponent. In Marc. II/22/1/26ff. Tertullian confronts a Marcionite whose error is fundamental. We already know the substance of the error from Idol. 5/3/6ff. Tertullian will oppose that error, which concerns God's immutability, at all costs, even if he has to change the literal meaning of the Mosaic injunction against images!

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[100] Apol. 42/3/12ff.; An. 6/7/64, 65; 17/11/75ff.; 20/1/1ff.; 20/4/30ff.; 24/4/27; Res. 7/12/52ff.

[101] J. Lortz, Tertullian als Apologet I, Münster, 1927, 1-15.

It is as if Tertullian had never written "Igitur omnis forma vel formula idolum se dici exposcit."

Tertullian was more than just a simple minded puritan in his opinion of visual arts and images. He opposed idolatrous images, but his definition of what was and what was not an idolatrous image shifted from one sequence to the next. What Tertullian said (and we may presume thought) about images was determined in great degree by what he hoped to achieve. Were it not for the fact that Tertullian chose to write the second half of chapter five of his treatise against idolatry in the form in which it is presently preserved, we could concur to a degree with T. Klauser that at least in this treatise Tertullian was one of those early church Fathers who "von Kunst nichts wissen wollten."[102] But Tertullian did write the second half of his chapter five and thereby altered radically the overall effect of his treatise.

A full presentation of Tertullian's attitudes toward visual arts and images is far beyond the scope of the present chapter. The foregoing observations are little more than notes to such a study. The success of such a study would depend upon the correctness of its method; each of Tertullians's statements apropos of the subject must be weighed in the light of the context in which it appears. For the present it is sufficient to have established that Tertullian knew full well the distinction between symbolic images and idolatrous images (these also being of course symbolic). Moreover Tertullian was not closed, as we have seen, to the notion that a symbolic visual image could be used to a sacred purpose, viz., prefiguring the crucifixion of the Christian messiah.

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[102] JbAC 10, 1967, 116.

There is very little that needs to be added to Bevan's and Butterworth's discussions of Clement on the subject of visual arts and images. The following therefore presents only an outline of the conclusions reached by them, and others, in their earlier investigations of Clement apropos of the "Bilderfrage."[103] That such an outline is feasible at all for Clement (as it would not be for Tertullian) is due mainly to the fact that his thoughts on the subject of visual arts did not change significantly from one sequence to the next.[104] In form, he presented his views on this subject in the well-known unstructured and unorganized rambling which characterizes all of his work, especially the *Stromata*. But the substance of what he thought about visual arts and images remained relatively constant.

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[103] G.W. Butterworth, "Clement of Alexandria and Art," JThS 17, 1915, 68-76; E. Bevan, op.cit., 86ff.; H. Koch, op.cit., 14-18; E.F. Osborn, The Philosophy of Clement of Alexandria, Cambridge, 1957, 181-83.

[104] In the Stromata 5/36/44 (Stählin ed. II/p. 351/line 1ff.), Clement rejects altogether the idea that God could have commanded an image to be made and hence Clement is involved here in the rejection of Scripture. Tertullian, by contrast, interprets the images in question as symbols.

Different elements in Clement combined to produce what we would call his attitude toward visual arts and images. By temperament he was puritanical and was convinced that, in conscience, he must oppose all visual imagery.[105] By education, and we may presume social circumstances, Clement had acquired a positive acquaintance with classical art. His awareness of this art included an appreciation of its formal qualities, and this aesthetic consciousness constitutes an important second element in defining his attitude toward visual images.[106] Clement's awareness of the aesthetic dimension of visual art was of course in conflict with his conscious committment as an opponent of all visual imagery. And in this conflict Clement was suspicious of beauty and invariably subordinated his aesthetic perceptions to the need, as he saw it, for thoroughgoing opposition to all visual imagery.[107] And finally, although committed to a position of thoroughgoing opposition to all visual imagery Clement, like Tertullian, perceived and acknowledged the distinction between the symbolic and the idolatrous.[108]

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[105] On the puritanical element in Clement cf. H. Chadwick, *Early Christian Thought and the Classical Tradition*, N.Y., 1966, 31ff. That Clement was opposed not just selectively to images which he judged to be idolatrous but to all images irrespective of their peculiarities is evident throughout his writings, esp. in the first of his trilogy, the *Protreptikos*. In chapter 4/62 (Stählin ed. I/47/28ff.) he presents a literal interpretation of *Exodus* 20/4. Cf. *Stromata* 5/5/28 (Stählin ed. II/344/7ff.). Clement's position parallels closely that of Philo who in his *De gigantibus* 13/59 wrote that Moses had "banished from his own commonwealth painting and sculpture, with all their high repute and charm of artistry, because their crafts belie the nature of truth and work deception and illusions through the eyes to souls that are ready to be seduced." (trans. F.H. Colson, G.H. Whitaker, *Philo* II, Cambridge, Mass. 1929, r.p., 1950). On the Rabbinic parallels cf. H. Strack, P. Billerbeck, *op. cit*. 4/1, 385ff. Philonic parallels in Clement are noted in Stählin's masterful index ("Register"), vol. 4, of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, Leipzig, 1936 (*GCS* 39), 47-49, 189, and the extent of Philo's influence on Clement is assessed in C. Mondésert, *Clement d'Alexandrie. Introduction a l'étude de sa pensée religieuse a partir de l'écriture*, Paris, 1944, 163 -183. Other studies by Quasten, Casel, Völker, and Jaeger are noted in L.H. Feldman, *Studies in Judaica. Scholarship on Philo and Josephus* (1937-62), n.d., 21.

It is impossible to say with any certainty what combination of factors led Clement to the conviction that all visual imagery must be opposed. Puritan temperament combined with Platonic epistemology might easily, though not necessarily, reach this conclusion. Clement understood the visual arts in the light of the Platonist critique of art as imitative and derivative, a part of the natural, material world, necessarily to be devalued as part of a lower and deceptive order of being. It is well known that Clement's attitudes of rigorism are by no means the necessary result of Platonic epistemology alone. Numerous Platonists, some of them his contemporaries, shared Clement's epistemological presuppositions but found it possible to esteem the visual arts.[109]

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[106] Emphasized by Butterworth, art.cit., 70-72.

[107] Probably the most famous example of the struggle in Clement to subordinate his aesthetic appreciation to his religious and moral convictions concerns Homer in the Protreptikos 4/59 (Stählin ed. I/46/9ff.) Clement invites the poet to sing his beautiful song, then suddenly cuts him short. It is as if Clement had forgotten for the moment that Homer is to be repudiated on moral grounds.

[108] C. Mondésert, "Le symbolisme chez Clement d'Alexandrie," Recherches de Science Religieuse 16, 1936, 150ff. For remarks in Clement apropos of the symbolism of the Tabernacle, Stromata 5/32 (Stählin ed. II/347/7) and the tau, Stromata 6/84 (Stählin ed. II/473/20), cf. E. Osborn, op.cit., 171.

For Clement the proper path to the truth was the way of the intellect and the spirit. By comparison, sense perception which was what the apprehension of the arts required, was deceptive and would lead as often to error as to truth. Despite this conviction Clement testifies very clearly to an awareness of both the aesthetic and the symbolic dimensions of visual arts and images. From his writings it appears that this awareness was never given free rein but was always subordinated to his rigoristic convictions.

5. Conclusion

It has been said that all of early Christianity was theoretically iconophobic and practically aniconic. The bases upon which this judgment is made are in part the written sources which we have just surveyed. What emerges from this survey is in fact the very limited character of the early Christian discussion of visual arts and images, at least for the first two centuries of Christianity. In great degree Christian authors restricted their observations to one class of images only, namely to those images which they judged to be idolatrous. Two types of idolatrous images were considered, the imperial image and the pagan sacred image. Most Christian authors who wrote about these two types of images opposed them and the realities (or chimera) to which they pointed. In the matter of the imperial image and the honors due to it the apologists chose to remain silent. Their reasons for doing so must be understood as a function of what they hoped to achieve.

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[109] E. Bevan, op.cit., 108, 109.

Only gradually did the truth about visual images and arts begin to play a part in the oldest surviving literature of Christianity. Stated simply, that truth amounts to an awareness of the complexities inherent in visual images, despite the one-dimensional interpretations which are often offered in the name of a given image. It is in Tertullian's writing more than anywhere else that we see the earliest evidence of a Christian author wrestling with the complexities of visual imagery judged in the light of Christian tradition.

By the end of the second century some Christian authors understood (and were willing to write) that all visual images need not be idolatrous. The recognition of the symbolic character of visual imagery and the admittance of this theme to early Christian literature began with Clement and Tertullian, although anticipations of this awareness are to be found in statements of Justin and Athenagoras. It is paradoxical that both Clement and Tertullian could perceive with clarity the symbolic dimension of visual imagery and could, at the same time, maintain that all visual imagery must be rejected because of the *a priori* connections between visual images and idolatry.

Our sources give us little or no insight into the conditions which prevailed (whether as attitudes or practices) in the internal life of the several communities represented. In fact, the degree to which the surviving written sources represent the mind of larger Christian groups is itself problematic.

All of the authors surveyed here reject the Christian use of idolatrous imagery, although Tertullian for one is able to change his mind from one literary sequence o the next in defining the components of idolatrous imagery. All of the authors agree that the deity cannot and should not be represented in visual form. This latter argument is a standard apologetic *topos* which Christian writers inherited from their Jewish and pagan forbears.

But what about the other manifold aspects of Christian belief and Christian practice? Could they be represented and symbolized in visual form? Clearly, there was a concern among early authors to divest certain types of images of any and all claim to validity, but our sources do not tell us how widespread and representative that concern was. Nor do we learn how much influence this concern, as expressed in writing, had on the practical affairs of Christian living. We should bear in mind Bevan's dictum, namely, that the relative depreciation and rejection of one class of images is not the same as the absolute and uncompromising repudiation of all images. How much the relative depreciation of idolatrous imagery, as expressed in the Christian literature of the first two centuries, helped to retard the cultivation and growth of other kinds of images (if at all) is simply unknown.

In the famous sequence of his Paedagogus 3/59/2 (Stählin ed. 1/270/7-11; cf. Chapter 3 below, Appendix II), Clement discusses the then universal custom of sealing household goods against theft. Christians will have images engraved on their signet rings, and we know from other passages in Clement's writings that three of the five images which he mentions (but not as visual types) were understood symbolically, as proto-Christian in intent.[110] The dove was known as symbolic of the Holy Spirit, the Logos, the faithful, and innocence. The fish was viewed as a symbol of the baptizand, and the ship as a symbol of the Christian soul and human life. The two other images which Clement argues would be acceptable as Christian glyptic are the lyre and the anchor, images which do not carry expressly Christian symbolic value in Clement's writing.[111] A sixth possible image has been contemplated in the translation of this passage, namely the fisher, but this depends on a problematic translation (cf. Chapter 3/Appendix II).

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[110] L. Eizenhöfer, "Die Siegelbildvorschläge des Clemens von Alexandrien und die älteste christliche Literatur," JbAC 3, 1960, 51-69.

Clement's discussion of images on signet rings has attracted a great deal of attention among students of early Christian art and archaeology as well as among students of early Christian literature.[112] Traditionally it is thought to constitute an "Anknüpfungspunkt," one of those rare points in the study of pre-Constantinian Christianity where the evidences from literature and from archaeology intersect and are mutually corroborative.

But strong objections have been raised to the traditional symbolic interpretation of this passage. T. Klauser, in particular, has been anxious to deny any possible symbolic value which might have been attached to Clement's five (or six) images.[113] If such symbolic value did exist then this would directly invalidate Klauser's theory of symbol (cf. Chapter 3/Appendix II) and indirectly would call into question the essential validity of his historical reconstruction, the "Entstehungsgeschichte." The images in question are purely decorative and neutral in character, according to Klauser. Clement does not mention Biblical iconography as a suitable subject for glyptic, hence Klauser argues that it did not exist at the time when Clement was writing. Clement is familiar with Christianity "from Athens to Alexandria, from Syria to Cappadocia," and hence his opinions represent a certain universal Christian practice. There was no "fertige christliche Kunstsymbolik" at Clement's time, although Klauser avows that Clement made the first step in that direction.[114] Clement allowed only inanimate or zoomorphic iconography, purely decorative, neutral, and non-symbolic in character, on signet rings. In a word, there was no Christian art at Clement's time. Another commentator has confirmed Klauser's conclusions, in even more vigorous language, the language of "eisexegesis."[115]

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[111] L. Eizenhöfer, art.cit., 62-67.

[112] H.D. Altendorf, "Die Siegelbildvorschläge des Clemens von Alexandrien," ZNTW 58, 1967, 135/n.26 (there the older literature).

[113] JbAC 1, 1958, 21-23.

In fact, the literal translation of Clement's passage does not forbid the symbolic interpretation of at least one image, either the anchor or the fisher (the passage may be translated in one of two ways; cf. Chapter3/Appendix II). Clement admits to Christian usage images which were not the invention of Christians but which could be harmonized with Christian belief. It is true that Clement does not identify each of the images in question as the symbolic embodiment of a particular Christian belief. He only identifies one image as expressly symbolic and Christian; the others are only potentially this. All of the images he mentions should be classified as proto-Christian.

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[114] ibid., 23, "Der erste Antoss zur Ausbildung einer solcher Symbolik," as Klauser puts it, was not made by Clement but was instead already present in the first century, as evidenced by the literature of the New Testament, the Christian Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha; cf. L. Eizenhöfer, art.cit., passim. The impulse was there, before Christianity, in Judaism.

[115] H.D. Altendorf, art.cit., 129ff.

But before we attempt to deal with that difficult problem, viz., the potentially symbolic character of proto-Christian imagery, it will be useful first to turn to the oldest surviving, figured material remains of Christianity. It is precisely the material object which helps to clarify what Clement was writing about and which helps us to understand the meaning of symbol in the context of Christianity prior to the mid-third century.

CHAPTER III

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

1. Introduction and Chronology.

The objective of the present chapter is to determine what the evidence from the oldest surviving Christian monuments can tell us about early Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images. A listing of the relevant monuments is contained in Appendix I at the end of the chapter. There the reader will find abbreviated descriptions of these monuments together with essential documentation. It is not an easy task to infer attitudes from monuments especially when, as in the example of the monuments which form the subject of the present chapter, so little is known about the attendant historical circumstances which brought them into existence. Since the subject is complicated, it will be well to keep in mind its several aspects from the outset.

First there is the matter of chronology. The upper chronological limit of this study is set by a small corpus of Christian monuments which traditionally are judged to constitute the beginning of early Christian art. We are concerned then with monuments which have been assigned with reasonable certainty to the early third century. Monuments that belong to the second half of the century, or to a later period, are expressly excluded as a basis of the ensuing discussion. Our focus here will be on monuments which by consensus belong to the so-called period of beginnings in the establishment of a Christian tradition of the visual arts. This period is thought to have come to an end toward the middle of the century and was replaced, in the second half of the century, by a period of development, expansion, and consolidation of the tradition, already established. Thus the one end of the chronological scale established for this study, the *terminus ad quem* and end of the so-called period of beginnings, corresponds approximately to the mid-third century. Further discussion of the chronology of monuments is contained in Appendices IV and V.

For the moment I leave open the more difficult problem of determining the date when this period began.

2. Social History.

There are many details which we would like to know about the oldest surviving Christian artifacts. Considering the vast extent of *Roma sotterranea*, which is the major geographical locus of early Christian painting and sculpture, our ignorance of essential information is all the more surprising. This ignorance is due in no small degree to the destructions of the early generations of pious adventurers who ransacked Rome in search of sacred treasure. Not only is the task of accurate chronological reconstruction frustrated immeasurably by these earlier depredations, but in addition our understanding of the social history associated with the oldest surviving Christian monuments has been irretrievably lost.

Authorship and patronship are unknown; we do not know who painted the earliest catacomb frescoes nor do we know who executed the oldest surviving Christian sculpted images. If the Hippolytus statue (cf. Appendix I) dates to the first half of the third century, it is the only surviving monument of its kind, that is, a monument which can be linked with a personality known from written sources. Otherwise the persons who caused the catacombs to be painted and Christian sarcophagi to be sculpted remain anonymous. We do not know what concatenation of economic and social circumstances laid the groundwork for the execution of the oldest surviving Christian visual arts. If it could be known, this information would be extremely useful to the definition of the present subject. After all, when we speak of early Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images, it is understood that we are talking about attitudes once held by living historical persons. But we know virtually nothing of these persons, who they were, what their circumstances were, or how their circumstances may have helped to shape and define the monuments which they left to posterity. We would like to know the complexities and interrelationships of the public and private spheres of their lives, the quality and extent of their adherence to the new religio illicita, their ecclesiastical status whether clergy or laity, their economic, social, and ethnic identities. Our task here is to read the Christian monuments of the third century; this task would be immeasurably facilitated if we knew more about the personal circumstances of the people who were originally associated with these monuments. As it stands, we must infer this information from the monuments themselves since they are our only prima facie evidence. But given the character of the monuments, inferences from them concerning social history can only be of an approximate and general nature.

The most important, recent effort to define the social origins of early Christian art is contained in the various publications of Theodor Klauser[1]. In order to understand the place which social history plays in Klauser's reconstruction, it is necessary first to form an idea of his comprehensive theory of origins.

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[1] T. Klauser, "Die Äusserungen der alten Kirche zur Kunst", AttiVI,CIAC 234 ff. Here Klauser speaks of "das massierte Verlangen der Laien nach Bildern..." Christian art which appeared before A.D. 350 must have been the product of lay circles or clergy who did not understand the church's tradition properly, "da kann es sich nur um private, aus

Klauser begins where Koch and Elliger left off, namely with the conviction that Christianity was universally and normatively rigoristic in the matter of images for approximately the first two centuries of its history.

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1 continued
dem Laientum, aus den Volke stammende Versuche handeln oder, das allerdings wohl nur selten, um Übergriffe von Klerikern, die über die kirchliche Tradition ungenugend orientiert sind." It then becomes necessary for Klauser to make Christianity at Dura Europos an atypical and unrepresentative (heterdox) sect, "Man lebt hier (Dura) sozusagen am Rande der Christenheit. Was hier geschieht, ist fur die übrige Kirche nicht kennzeichnend." Further discussion of social history is contained in "Erwägungen zur Entstehung der altchristlichen Kunst", ZKG 76, 1965, 9; "Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der christlichen Kunst I", JbAC 1, 1958, 21; "Der Beitrag der orientalischen Religionen, insbesondere des Christentums, zur spätantiken und frühmittelalterlichen Kunst, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei 365, 1968 (Quaderno N. 105), 72, 73; and under the joint authorship of W. Deichmann and T. Klauser, Frühchristliche Sarkophage in Bild und Wort, Antike Kunst 3 Beiheft, Olten/Schwiez, 1966, 5ff. (contains the most complete discussion of Klauser's theory of the social origins of early Christian art). Older discussions of the problem include G. La Piana, "The Roman Church at the End of the Second Century", HTR 18, 1925, 201ff., and A. Bigelmair, Die Beteiligung der Christen am öffentlichen Leben in vorconstantinischer Zeit, Munich, 1902, 293ff.

In the early third century certain Christians did what had never been done before within the Christian fold, i.e., they made pictures. In other words, on the question of the beginning of early Christian art, Klauser regards the archaeological argument from silence as binding; the oldest surviving figured artifacts of Christianity constitute the absolute terminus a quo and point of beginning in the establishment of a Christian tradition of image-making. Christian images which we can date and identify according to present methods do not survive from the period prior to the early third century; hence according to Klauser Christians did not make images prior to ca. 200 A.D.

Klauser tells us that some Christians departed from aniconic precedent in the early third century. Their decision to do this must have involved a good deal of soul searching. After all, according to Klauser's own reading of the sources, Christianity was universally and normatively an aniconic religion for the first two centuries of its history. Thus the decision to depart from aniconic tradition cannot have been taken lightly; it must have been a decision which involved some serious deliberations. Klauser ascribes the causes of this decision (and hence the subsequent introduction of images into the Christian tradition) to two factors. Given Klauser's premises, both factors are hardly adequate as historical explanations of the beginning of early Christian art.

As the first alternative, Klauser points to the fact that Christians needed to protect their household possessions against theft, and they did this by sealing their possessions with identifying marks or images (cf. Appendix II). The seals which they used were metal finger rings set with carved stones. Klauser then suggests that image-making may have entered Christianity, somewhat willy-nilly, via glyptic. As Klauser explains it the process whereby images came into the Christian tradition sounds almost accidental; in the desire to protect their private property certain Christians introduced images into their tradition, and thereby unconsciously introduced image-making into the Christian tradition.[2] As I have already said, it follows logically from Klauser's own deliberations, that the introduction of image-making into the Christian community, which constituted simultaneously a break with the normative and aniconic past, could not have been the produce of "accident" and could not have occurred unconsciously.

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[2] T. Klauser, art.cit. IV, JbAC 4, 1961, 136ff., and art. cit., ZKG 76, 1965, 9ff.

Klauser's alternate explanation of the introduction of visual images into Christianity concerns the supposed influence on orthodox Christian thought and practice which was exerted from external heterodox sources: Gnostic Christians made images before their orthodox fellows and influenced the latter in their decision to do the same.[3] In other words, image-making entered the main stream of Christianity from one of its polluted tributaries, Gnosticism, and Gnosticism is ultimately responsible for the origins and development of early Christian art. It goes without saying that this theory is especially supported by those who view primitive Christinatiy as originally and normatively an aniconic religion. It is a theory, however, which is not easily verified in the surviving sources (cf. Appendix III).

The major issue which concerns us here is the social composition of those groups which, according to Klauser's theory, broke with aniconic precedent in the early third century. Klauser believes that the people responsible for the break were largely of humble social origins, illiterate laymen who were as untutored in their faith as they were in secular learning. Their decision to make images contravened the Mosaic law and went against the normative aniconic tradition which had been upheld by the better-educated and theologically more sophisticated clerical class. For some unknown reason, the enlightened clerical class tolerated the existence of their simple, iconophilic fellows throughout the third century. And in the following century the clergy acknowledged what was by then a "fair accompli", i.e., Christian image-making, and resolved to bring the production of images under their own ecclesiastical control and supervision.[4]

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[3] T. Klauser, art.cit., ZKG 76, 1965, 7.

Klauser arrives at his theory of the social origins of early third century Christian art by way of inference from the oldest surviving monuments; hence his theory is only as valid as are his characterizations of early Christian painting and sculpture. According to Klauser, the Christian art of the early third century should be called "folk art"; it combines Biblical iconography with a strong admixture of pagan themes and compositions and is, as art, low in quality. In the case of sarcophagi, Biblical thematic is sandwiched into a compositional framework which is demonstrably pagan.[5] In other words, the content of this art should be described as pagano-Christian and eclectic; the content reveals no positive principle of selectivity and discrimination in the choice of iconography, no principle, that is, which would be acceptable by later orthodox standards.[6] Early third century Christian art is a non-ecclesiastical folk-art, conceived and executed by simple, untutored laymen who did not really understand their own tradition (normative aniconism) and who did not have the benefit of clerical and ecclesiastical supervision.

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[4] ibid.

[5] In addition to the derivation of Christian imagery from pagan origins, Klauser inclines to favor the Jewish hypothesis as well: Christian images depend, at least in part, on Jewish models; cf. art.cit., Accad.Naz. d. Lincei 365, 1968, 59ff., and art.cit. IV, JbAC 4, 1961, 128ff.

In fact, the consequence of Klauser's theory is that many of the artifacts of the early third century which we have been accustomed to call Christian are not Christian at all. Images such as the shepherd-criophoros and the orans figure which by tradition embody Christian meanings do not stand the test of Klauser's criterion of identification and hence must be excised from the traditional repertory of early third century Christian art. The only images which do stand the test of identification are those which are clearly inspired by Biblical models: the only truly Christian images of the early third century are Biblical images. As I have tried to point out in Appendix II, Klauser's conception of what makes an image Christian builds upon a reductionistic theory of symbol, in effect a form of archaeological fundamentalism.[7]

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[6] T. Klauser, art.cit., ZKG 76, 1965, 9, "Der ganze Motivischatz der frühesten christlichen Kunst erweist sich als willkürliche, auf Zufällen beruhende Auswahl."

And finally, Klauser believes that the "Volkskunst" of the third century was replaced by the "Bischofskunst" (alternately called "Kirchenkunst") of the Constantinian and post-Constantinian periods. The process of transition involved purification; the eclectic, pagano-Christian iconography of the third century was replaced under clerical supervision by an iconography which was manifestly inspired in all details by Christian (i.e., Biblical) principles. Pagan elements, such as the shepherd-criophoros, were suppressed and expunged; clerical expurgation created the ecclesiastical (and more purely Christian) art of the fourth century.

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[7] Klauser's fundamentalist theory of Christian symbols, which requires the objective presence of Biblically inspired images, has an interesting parallel in the contemporary dialogue concerning the nature of symbol and image. Among the participants in this dialogue are the neo-Marxists, Georg Lukács and Konrad Farner, both of whom oppose western bourgeois intellectuals and argue vigorously against the subjective character of the modern (western) understanding of symbols. Lukács and Farner regard a subjective epoch such as our own, in which to an unprecedented degree the individual imagination creates its own symbols, as a period of cultural regression. Lukács contrasts this with Goethe's understanding of symbols, which conceives the content of symbols, whether natural (i.e., his "Urpflanzen") or man-made, to be

Some of Klauser's theory of the social origins of the oldest surviving Christian art makes sense. There is more than a little agreement that the quality of this art is low; many of the images which accompany early Christian inscriptions are little more than _graffiti_ (unfortunately Klauser does not discuss this aspect of the problem). The oldest surviving fresco painting and such epigraphic graffiti as survive presume a social patronage of very low origins. Christians who were laid to rest in _loculus_ or _forma_ graves which had been cut out of Rome's tufa were surely not rich people. The images which were executed to accompany these burials, whether painted or incised pictures, are correspondingly humble testimony of the poor man's hope and faith in salvation.

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particular, concrete, objectively present for all to behold. For works by Lukács and Farner, cf. Manfred Lurker, _Bibliographie zur Symbolkunde_, Baden-Baden, 1968, and by the same author, _Bibliographie zur Symbolik, Ikongraphie und Mythologie_, Baden-Baden, 1948ff. Klauser is an objectivist also; his theory of symbol completely disregards the workings of the subjective, symbol-making, mythopoeic imagination which is abundantly in evidence during periods of cultural dissolution and transformation; late antiquity was such a period.

It is also important to note images which concern us here are religious images but they are probably not theological images. This observation is implied in Klauser's analysis of the social origins of early Christian art, although he does not explain himself very clearly on this subject. As I will argue further on in this chapter, I believe that virtually all of the images in question are expressions of a relatively unified nucleus of religious belief. Religion as the experience of the sacred should be distinguished from theology, the latter concerns the intellectual and academic articulation of the former. Judged by later Constantinian and post-Constantinian standards,[8] the oldest surviving Christian iconography does not reflect the presence of guiding compositional principles which are derived either from theology or from Biblical exegesis. In 1965 Klauser wrote that the choice and disposition of subject matter in early third century Christian art had not been determined by any conscious principles but was instead largely an accidental and arbitrary product.[9] Klauser's observation is intriguing, and in a certain sense, very much to the point. Later Christian art, especially the church cycles of mosaics and paintings, reflect precisely the guiding presence of theological composition and Biblical (typological) exegesis. Images are arranged in parataxis, in appositional patterns, Jewish prefigurations or types and their Christian fulfillments or antitypes. This is well-known and requires no further elaboration here.[10]

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[8] But is this a legitimate standard by which to judge an earlier period about which we know so little? Instructive and intelligently cautious remarks on this point of method are offered by J.B. Ward Perkins, "Memoria, Martyr's Tomb and Martyr's Church", AttiVII.CIAC, 3.

But the Christian images which concern us here are not disposed according to any demonstrable compositional patterns that can be shown to derive from contemporary theology or exegesis. There are of course compositional principles at work in the execution of these images, and this is especially evident in the arrangement of sculpted images across the frieze fronts of Christian sarcophagi. But as we have learned from F. Gerke's magisterial study, the principle of composition which was at work in the fabrication of the oldest surviving Christian sarcophagi was not a principle that had been determined by the then contemporary Christian theologians but was instead a principle of composition which elaborated in pagan workshops by pagan craftsmen.[11] The compositional principles which underlie Christian relief sculpture of the early third century are formal principles determined by pagan funerary standards of stone cutting and have little or nothing to do with the then contemporary Christian theology. The consequence of this fact for the social history of early third century art is that priests (the theologians) were not involved in conceiving or producing the images in question.

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[9] T. Klauser, art.cit., ZKG 76, 1965,9.

[10] A. Grabar, Christian Iconography, New York, 1968, 109ff. (There the older literature.)

But if we admit, with Klauser, that bishops and priests were not involved in the production of visual arts before ca. A.D. 350, then who was responsible for this art? Klauser insists on the "volkisch" character of Christian art prior to the mid-fourth century, a designation which when applied to all of the Christian art of the early third century, sarcophagi included, loses all meaning. Are we supposed to believe that the oldest surviving paintings and graffiti and sarcophagi are all equally "volkisch", and if so what does "Volkskunst" mean? Obviously, sarcophagi, or for that matter, gilded glass vessels were produced by people who were considerably richer than were the persons who were laid to rest in loculus and forma burials.

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[11] F. Gerke, Die christlichen Sarkophage der vorkonstantinischen Zeit, Berlin, 1940.

The Christians who were interred in sarcophagi in the early third century chose intellectual and philosophical imagery to decorate their stone funerary boxes. They were surely literate people who had enjoyed a degree of formal education. They even aspired to philosophical virtue. And they had money, in the case of the patron who paid for the Brignoles sarcophagus (whose Christian identification Klauser denies) or the sarcophagus from the church of Sta. Maria Antiqua, lots of money. If the paintings in the catacombs are "volkisch", then early Christian relief sculpture (as well as free-standing sculpture; e.g., the Cleveland Marbles) is not. The latter may indeed have been "Laienkunst", but the laymen who purchased the sarcophagi in question were rich and certainly were in much more privileged circumstances than their fellow Christians who were buried in the catacombs. Klauser does not treat this subject adequately, nor does he even mention the question of land ownership. Admittedly this is a thorny problem, one which cannot be resolved given the present fragmentary state of the

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sources. But someone had to have paid for the land which Christians acquired for burial purposes at least from the early third century onward, and hence this matter deserves to be considered in any comprehensive discussion of the social history which produced the oldest surviving Christian imagery.[12]

An important part of Klauser's theory concerns the distinction between a literate and educated and iconophobic clergy and its opposite, an untutored, iconophilic laity which was responsible for the original break with aniconic precedent in the early third century. But this leaves unexplained the evidence from the Callixtus catacomb where from at least the early third century onward clergy and laity were buried close by each other. If the clergy had felt that the image-making activities of their fellows constituted a break with the aniconic norm of the church, then surely there would have been a concerted effort to discourage or forbid picture making at this time.[13]

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[12] G. Bovini, La proprietà ecclesiastica e la condizione giuridica della chiesa in età preconstantiniano, Milano, 1948 (there the older literature).

[13] T. Klauser, art.cit., ZKG 76, 1965, 7. There are still other problems which Klauser does not explain adequately. Clement's readership, which Klauser makes responsible in part for the introduction of images into the Christian

3. Circumstances of Survival.

Most of the material culture of early Christianity has perished. Only a handful of the oldest monuments survive, monuments, that is, which we can identify as Christian with reasonable certainty and which can be dated according to present methods. It is often simply assumed that the oldest surviving figured monuments of Christianity constitute the absolute beginning of early Christian art and image-making. But a certain scepticism is appropriate, and is a healthy antidote to the overly positivistic tendencies which one encounters in the literature of early Christian art. Do the oldest surviving figured monuments of Christianity really represent an absolute *terminus a quo*, or are they instead only the few monuments which happen to survive from a relatively ancient date?

If the former possibility were proved, then Christianity would become in practice universally and consciously

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tradition, was lay, literate, and relatively rich. Also, in distinguishing between theologically sophisticated clergy and their opposite, a theologically naive laity, it is well to keep in mind that not all theologians were clergy. Justin and Tertullian, for instance, were laymen. And not all clergy were theologically sophisticated, e.g., Callixtus.

an aniconic religion prior to the third century. But this must be proved, and the burden of proof rests squarely on the shoulders of those who use the archaeological argument from silence to support their theory of universal Christian iconophobia prior to the third century. It is my opinion that negative evidence as applied to this historical problem is no evidence, i.e., is simply the absence of evidence. In fact, we do not know if Christians made images prior to the third century. If they did, none survive, at least none which we can identify. Not knowing that something existed is different from knowing that it did not exist. The former may, in some instances, be a convincing proof of the latter; but in this case it is not. It will be necessary to return to this question in the concluding chapter after we have surveyed the monumental evidence.

4. Identification of Christian monuments: Proto-Christian images and Gnostic art.

In addition to the three above-mentioned problem areas, i.e., chronology, authorship—patronship, and circumstances of survival, there is a fourth area of which we must be cognizant as we proceed to comment on the figured material remains of early third century Christianity. This is the matter of identification.

The problem can be stated in its simplest form as the following question: which monuments of the early third century are Christian, which are not, and by what criteria can we distinguish between those that are and those that are not? My present purpose is to state concisely the conclusions which I have reached in dealing with this question. A more detailed discussion of how I came to these conclusions is contained at the end of the chapter in Appendices II and III.

The identification of the oldest surviving Christian images brings us face to face with the problematic existence of two separate but intersecting historical complexes. The one, which I refer to here as proto-Christian imagery, is known also by the term, crypto-Christian art; the other is Gnostic art. Those images are proto-Christian which appear in an early Christian context but are known to have existed in other religions in antiquity prior to their appearance in a Christian context. As pictorial types, proto-Christian images have a life of their own independent of Christianity and prior to it. Often they pass into Christian usage substantially unaltered as visual forms, and in some cases, their symbolic content (if they have symbolic content and are not mere decoration) remains unchanged.

Proto-Christian images are not normally inspired by Biblical models and do not illustrate Biblical narratives. They are generic images, and hence their interpretation is more ambiguous than that of images inspired by Biblical or historical precedents. Proto-Christian images bear broad associations of meaning, e.g., hope, salvation, and immortality, and hence are images that are common to numerous religious traditions in antiquity, especially in late antiquity.

Theodor Klauser has argued that the religio-symbolic significance of a given proto-Christian image must be understood in relation primarily to the meaning which it embodied in its pre-Christian context. Thus, in the case of the pictorial image of the shepherd-*criophoros*, despite the fact that this well-known image evoked a constellation of meanings relative to the Jesus of Christianity, Klauser argues that the religio-symbolic significance of the shepherd-*criophoros* in early Christian art must be understood primarily as an expression of pagan, not Christian, spirituality. In practice the application of Klauser's theory affects the traditional identification of Christian monuments in a momentous way. The image of the shepherd-*criophoros* is the keystone of Klauser's theory of religious symbols, and it provides a dramatic example of the consequences of this theory in practice. The shepherd-criophoros is judged to be exclusively pagan, or nearly so, and hence according to this theory an entire corpus of shepherd images which were once thought to embody preeminently Christian meanings must be systematically deleted from the iconographic repertory of early Christian art.

But Klauser's theory is misleading. Proto-Christian images were pagan images (or Jewish images) which were capable of being harmonized with Christian belief. Proto-Christian pictorial images, just like proto-Christian literary forms, could acquire a new level of meaning relative to the new (Christian) context in which they appeared. The former, pre-Christian religio-symbolic associations of such images were not erased or obliterated by this transition, but to the old associations of meaning a new one was added. Proto-Christian images were potentially open to a new level of meaning, not despite the symbolic associations of meaning sustained in a pre-Christian context, but precisely because of these. As symbols, proto-Christian images are multidimensional; they are capable of sustaining a plurality of meanings simultaneously. The contrary argument which states that a symbolic image must necessarily acquire a fixed meaning at a given stage in its religio-historical evolution and may not acquire any new levels of meaning is an argument which is reductionistic in character and which contradicts the symbol-making activities of more than one religious tradition. In other words, I stand with the traditionalists. A pictorial image, such as that of the shepherd-criophoros, may appear in a Christian context but may be well-known from a variety of other non-Christian contexts. When and if such an image occurs in a Christian context, its religio-symbolic signification should be sought first relative to Christian belief and practice. This rule of thumb will prove useful in identifying images whose context is secure. However, when the context in which a given image appears is unknown or is ambiguous the religio-symbolic signification of that image will prove to be largely a matter of probabilities.

The second historical complex which impinges on the definition and identification of the oldest surviving Christian imagery is the small second and third century corpus of so-called Gnostic arts. The very existence of such a corpus, as defined, is problematic. Those who support the existence of a distinct form of Gnostic art, dating from the second century onward, must demonstrate in at least one example the clear connection between a given monument or artifact and its Gnostic literary source. To date, no one has successfully shown this connection.

There are two major Roman funerary sites which have been identified (not unanimously) as Gnostic. These sites are approximately contemporaneous with the oldest surviving nucleii of the Roman catacombs. By comparison with the latter, the one site, known as the Tomb of the Aurelii, contains an elaborate iconography executed by a craftsman of relatively superior technical achievements. But in neither place is there any necessary connection between pictorial iconography, as it is preserved, and Gnosticism, as we know it. To be sure, different types of Gnostic religion were influential in the formation of certain fourth and fifth century pictographs and symbols which are preserved in abundance on magical amulets, talismans of various form, and gems. But this does not alter the picture for the pre-Constantinian period, in which the existence of a distinct form of Gnostic art is problematic when we consider only the surviving material sources.

But we are not dependent on material sources alone. In more than one place Irenaeus tells his readers that certain Gnostics painted pictures and made images. We do not know, however, if the iconography of such images was representative of distinctly Gnostic beliefs and practices; Irenaeus omits any reference to this detail. We also do not know how reliable Irenaeus was in reporting this aspect of Gnostic religion.

But even if we accept for the moment that certain Gnostics did what Irenaeus said they did, and even if we assume that these persons developed a distinct pictorial iconography relative to the idiosyncracies of their own Gnostic beliefs, still this does not prove the theory which so many scholars have wanted to prove: that orthodox early Christians, who were in matters of organization and practice adherents of the "Grosskirche", inherited their tendency to representationalism from a heterodox and sectarian minority.[14] Gnostic art, just like many of the better known examples of proto-Christian art, is judged by the supporters of this theory to be the product of communities or persons who were outside of the mainstream of the Christian tradition. And hence the tendency to pictorial representationalism among later Orthodox Christians is traced back to an unholy and unwholesome source, in fact a source which is judged to be extraneous to the true tradition and which is thus not really Christian at all. Picture-making is shown thereby to have entered the mainstream of Christianity from one of its most polluted tributaries.

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[14] T. Klauser, art.cit., ZKG 76, 1965, 7.

Although it is almost certainly misleading, the theory of the Gnostic origins of early Christian art dies hard. Part of its appeal is that it supports the notion that picture-making is a lower form of spiritual activity, lower, that is, than the application of verbal and literate skills to spiritual ends. The fact that this debased activity should be carried on openly in Christian circles is explained (or explained away) with the suggestion that picture-making was not originally an essential part of the true tradition.

It is in fact very difficult or impossible to demonstrate the existence of a distinct form of Gnostic art which dates from the second or third centuries. In a certain sense the term, Gnostic art, is often used as a kind of iconographic wastebasket in the study of early Christian art; if an image cannot be identified as a part of traditional Christian iconography it will be assigned to iconographic limbo, i.e., Gnostic art. It is certainly possible that certain Gnostic Christians had developed their own separate pictorial language by the second or early third centuries. It is also possible that some Gnostics influenced (either positively or negatively) non-Gnostic Christianity in the matter of visual images. But these are possibilities which are very difficult to test against the surviving sources. There is no recognizable repertory of Gnostic images which might be compared with contemporary non-Gnostic iconography. Given the considerable uncertainty associated with the concept of a Gnostic form of art, it is probably best simply to drop the term altogether. As it has been used in the past, this term has added simply one further item of unclarity in a field of study (Gnosticism) which is already beclouded with methodological and substantive uncertainties.

5. Was early Christian art original?

With his insistence that early Christian art was a new and unprecedented formal creation Wilpert inspired his opponents to pursue in detail the typological origins of early Christian iconography. This subject was not unknown prior to Wilpert but it has been pursued with greater intensity in this century than in any other. Wilpert was wrong. Early Christian iconography, and in particular the iconography which constitutes the basis of the present study, clearly had its formal antecedents and precedents. There is universal agreement on this point, even though the precise points of dependency or the relative degree of dependency are sometimes disputed. It is not always clear that typological similarities and common resemblances imply direct filiation and dependency of Christian images upon Jewish or pagan models. I have already discussed this subject above in chapter one, and only the following qualification needs to be introduced here.

When we survey the repertory of the oldest surviving Christian iconography, as contained in Appendix I, there are very few motifs which are formally unprecedented. All of the so-called proto-Christian iconography is in fact pagan imagery carrying potentially new spheres of meaning (cf. Appendix II). This includes Bacchic and Orphic imagery, pastoral and maritime iconography, philosophic imagery and meal scenes. The majority of Biblical images are also formally dependent on pagan models. The sleeping Jonah derives from representations of Endymion, baptism is sometimes portrayed in the form of impositio manus, figures at prayer, such as Daniel, derive from late Republican pietas personifications, the raising of Lazarus resembles scenes of the raising of Osiris, representations of Adam and Eve may derive from Jason and Medea iconography as may Noah from Deucalion, and Abraham's intended sacrifice of his son is often portrayed according to the iconographic model of human sacrifice and execution.[15]

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[15] The literature relative to these iconographic dependencies is given in Appendix I.

In chapter one I said that the Christians who developed a visual iconography relative to their own set of beliefs did so by borrowing from pagan models. Von Sybel regarded this as a false way of construing the transition from pagan to Christian. Christians did not have to borrow from paganism; they were pagans and religion for them was paganism. In developing a funerary iconography which shows substantial dependence on pagan models they were only doing what came naturally. Where else were they to look other than to pagan funerary art?

In his desire to illuminate the continuity of religious experience in antiquity von Sybel overstated his theory and made Christianity a form of late antique syncretism. In von Sybel's reconstruction conversion and baptism are reduced necessarily to the status of mere moments in the life of the Christian, whereas the sources emphasize that they are decisive and transforming events. It is probably more accurate to say of Christians living in Rome toward the end of the second or beginning of the third centuries not that they were pagans but that they had been pagans, they, or their parents or possibly even their grandparents, but now they were Christians. An important change in their lives had occurred. Traditional religion, paganism, was not obliterated in them by their conversion to Christianity; instead traditional religion acquired new and important dimensions. It was to be expected that these Christians, formerly pagans, would turn to pagan models when they came to develop their own funerary imagery.

The foregoing observations highlight an important aspect of the development of early Christian iconography, an aspect which bears upon the central subject of this study. Originally Christian iconography was rooted in pagan models; the development of this iconography involved its gradual disassociation from its pagan origins.

6. Architecture.

The first material source which we must consider here is architecture. Frequent note has been made of the two primitive Christian apologetic speeches, contained in the canonical Acts of the Apostles, in opposition to the idea of a sacred architecture. This idea was already venerable and universal when Stephen and Paul set about to oppose it. Certain architectural forms and the spaces or places which they delimited were thought to be hallowed by their intimate association with one or another deity. Every civilization in antiquity had its sacred geography; sacred places were often associated with divine epiphany and, in the Greek world particularly, the epiphany and ongoing presence of a deity was often symbolized by the erection of a temple, construed as the real or metaphorical residence of the god or goddess in question.[16]

The two oldest Christian apologies against the concept of sacred place and its architectural complement are contained in Stephen's Jerusalem speech, _Acts_ 7/2ff., and Paul's famous defense of Christianity, which by tradition he is said to have delivered on the Areopagus before an assembly of Athenians, _Acts_ 17/22ff.

We are told that Stephen had been accused of speaking incessantly κατὰ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἁγίου, _Acts_ 6/13, and that he had spoken in his own defense of the new religion before the high priest and before the assembled members of several Jerusalem synagogues. In his speech Stephen compared the σκηνὴ τοῦ μαρτυρίου, _Acts_ 7/44, which belonged to Israel's formative period in the desert as a nomadic people, with the later οἶκος built for Yahweh by Solomon, _Acts_ 7/47. With an appeal to _Isaiah_ 66/1,2, Stephen then expounded his own theology of the ὕψιστος, and in doing so criticized Solomon and all those errant Jews like him (including Stephen's audience) who thought that the transcendent God could be made to dwell in a temple or house made by human hands,

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[16] M. Nilsson, _Geschichte der Griechischen Religion_ I, Munich, 1967, 71ff.

Acts, 8/47ff.

Paul spoke in a similar manner to an audience of Gentiles convened on Mars' Hill within sight of the Acropolis and its mighty temple sacred to Athena, foundress and benefactress of Athens. God the creator of the cosmos is beyond any natural contingency, Paul explained, and hence he does not dwell in man-made monuments, nor is he served by human hands; he needs nothing, Acts 17/24ff.

These ideas, reported here by the author of Luke-Acts, are in fact a literary commonplace, a topos, in the Christian writings, especially the apologetic writings, of the late first and second centuries. This topos represents one of the sources of later apophatic theology in the mystical tradition represented by Pseudo-Dionysius (e.g., de Caelesti Hierarchia 2/3 MPG 3, 141 A.) The Apologists frequently recite the list of God's negative attributes in order to demonstrate his essential otherness, omnipotence, transcendence, and utter independence of the creation: ... ἀόρατος ... ἀχώρητος ... ἀνεπιδέης ... ἀκατάληπτος ... ἄφθαρτος ... ἀποίητος ... Clemens Alex., Strom. VI/5, 39-41 (Kerygma Petrou).[17]

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[17] E. Klostermann (hrsg.), "Reste des Petrusevangeliums, der Petrusapokalypse, und des Kerygma Petri", Kleine Texte für theologische und philologische Vorlesungen und Übungen 3, Bonn, 1908, 13ff.

As noted above in chapter two, early Christian apology is _Tendenzliteratur_, addressed to an educated and powerful pagan readership by authors who hoped to gain recognition and respectability for their new sect. Christianity, it is argued, can be just as rational and enlightened as paganism, in fact more so. Part of the demonstration of Christianity's essential good sense required (or so it seemed) that the primitive and animistic beliefs and practices of the simpler classes be ridiculed: Some poor fools believed that buildings and the spaces they contained had become sacred because gods and goddesses dwelled within them. This _topos_ occurs with predictability throughout the literature of early Christian apology. Christian apologists argued that it was irrational and absurd to think of divinity as subject to any natural contingencies. According to popular religion and popular mythology the pantheon consisted of greater and lesser personal deities whose divinity did not prevent them from being involved in the affairs of human history and in the ordering of the cosmos. The Christian God, argued the apologists, is superior to them all; he is free and transcendent, utterly unaffected by the human and natural contingencies to which other deities were subject.

From the late first century onward Christian apologists attacked the idea of a sacred geography, sacred spaces and sacred architecture. This was consistent with their purpose, namely to disassociate their own enlightened sect from pagan superstition. An uncritical reading of this literature has led to the conclusion that pre-Constantinian Christians were conscientiously and ascetically indifferent to sacred architecture. Christians were accordingly spiritual and interior people at this time in their history (to be distinguished from the later Constantinian "neo-pagan" stage of their history) and could not be bothered with such "external" matters as the buildings or halls or rooms in which they celebrated their cult and otherwise conducted their religious and philanthropic affairs.

W. Deichmann has advocated this interpretation in a brief article, entitled "Vom Tempel zur Kirche"; his view may be summarized as follows.[18] Two different kinds of religion in antiquity were predicated upon two different conceptions of divinity, the one aniconic, the other iconic. Greeks inclined to the latter conception, Semites to the former, i.e., the rejection of sacred things and sacred places as representations, whether real or symbolic, of divinity. The Jew's conception of his god is free of dependence on things: "Die Gottesvorstellung ist vom Gegenstand gelöst".[19] Deichmann regards the cult of later Judaism in the setting of the synagogue as a highly spiritualized form of prayer," ...losgelöst von örtlicher, irdisch-materieller Bindung."[20]

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[18] W. Deichmann, "Vom Tempel zur Kirche", Mullus. Festschrift T. Klauser, JbAC Ergänzungsbd. I, 1964, 52-59.

To the Jew, consciousness of the community was primary; it was in the sacred community that he experienced regeneration and salvation. His intense awareness of sacred community rendered irrelevant the notion of sacred place or sacred thing. The only true temple was the people, Israel; it was this intensely spiritual consciousness of the community which led to Israel's asceticism and indifference vis à vis architecture and its related arts and crafts. According to Deichmann, Judaism in antiquity was a religion interiorized and spiritualized, a religion no longer in need of such "external" architectural and cultic appurtenances as were common in the religions of Greco-Roman paganism.

Christianity inherited many of the essential features of Judaism, its aniconic conception of divinity, its interiorized and spiritualized cultus, its primary consciousness of community as the ground of revelation. Christianity too was an interiorized religion, a spiritualized religion with no need for such external pariphernalia as temples, altars, and images. The community is God's earthly temple; a building built by human hands can never be a true sanctuary of God: "Das Heiligtum des Urchristentums konnte daher keine irdische Gestalt, keine architektonische Form, annehmen. Es gab keinen von Menschenhand gebauten Tempel. Ein solcher wäre Götzenwerk gewesen".[21]

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[19] *ibid.*, 53.

[20] *ibid.*, 54.

Primitive Christianity, the religion of a people who were intensely conscious of the indwelling of the spirit, gradually lost its interior life. Community possession of the spirit was replaced by clerical hierarchy; Christianity became a more external religion focussing its attention away from the interior life of the spirit. As ecclesial self-consciousness waned, there were gradually created the conditions conducive to the development of a Christian form of sacred architecture and its related arts. This idea bore its first creative fruits in the fourth century under Constantine.

In its treatment of the visual arts, including architecture, Liberal Protestantism showed a chronic incapacity to grasp how a material thing could be the conveyance of something "spiritual". This Protestantism was a victim of the nineteenth-century materialism and did not escape its influence in its understanding of the arts; spiritual meant simply the absence of material. The same tendency to depreciate material things informs Deichmann's analysis of the place of architecture in the early church. Deichmann's critical terms are an inheritance of the nineteenth century: immanence-transcendence, iconic-aniconic, material-spiritual, external-interior, sacred thing-sacred person, sacred place-sacred community. Sacred architecture belongs to the realm of the external and material; it is all right for paganism but inappropriate for religions which value the spirit and the interior life. In truth, Deichmann has overstated an aspect of early Christianity, namely its interior life and consciousness of community, and has interpreted architecture in the light of this overstatement. His theory is corroborated by both the surviving written and archaeological sources only in limited extent. Certain facts need clarification.

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[21] _ibid._, 55.

Only one example of a pre-Constantinian Christian building survives, namely the house which was intended to house the _ecclesia_ and serve as its cult aedifice at Dura Europos.[22] This building was a common variant of the local domestic architecture and was not distinctive either in design or structure. It was not constructed by the Dura Christians but was instead purchased by them after its construction had been completed. Interior modifications were effected, most of them minor in character, in order to accommodate the building to its new inhabitants.[23] Most of these interior modifications were determined by utilitarian considerations. The most commonly cited of these concerns the removal of the partition wall at the south-western end of the southern room so that this room, an assembly room, could accommodate a larger group of people.[24]

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[22] _Final Report_ VIII/2; R. Krautheimer, _Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture,_ Baltimore, Md., 1965, 1-15, and by

But another well-known interior alteration was introduced, and it served no apparent utilitarian purpose, namely the lowering of the ceiling in the baptistery.[25] Probably

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22 continued
the same author, "The Beginning of Early Christian Architecture", Studies in Early Christian, Mediaeval and Renaissance Art, N.Y. London, 1969, 1-20; W. Rordorf, "Was wissen wir über die christlichen Gottesdiensträume der vorkonstantinischen Zeit?", ZNTW 55, 1964, 110-128.

[23] Final Report VIII/2, 3-39.

[24] Final Report VIII/2, 14-20.

[25] Final Report VIII/2, 24, 25, 43, 44, 197-200.

this was done in order to intensify the symbolic impression which this room was meant to convey.[26] In any event, the one surviving example of pre-Constantinian Christian architecture does not bear out the contention that all early Christinas were dour utilitarians in matters of architecture, consciously and ascetically indifferent to the potential religious value of architectural forms.

Commentators have argued that the written and archaeological evidence favors the view that Christians prior to the fourth century rejected the idea of a religious or sacred architecture for reasons of spirituality.[27] Under archaeological evidence one normally understands simply the absence of identifiable Christian buildings from the pre-Constantinian period. Naturally it stands to reason that whatever buildings Christians may have built or purchased during this period have perished. Christians built funerary places beneath the earth's surface, and some of these have survived. These are the only Christian architectural remains which survive from the pre-Constantinian period. Their survival is clearly the result of their location.

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[26] Final Report VIII/2, 197-200

[27] H. Koch, Die altchristliche Bilderfrage nach den literarischen Quellen, Göttingen, 1917, 24, 96.

Probably the extent of Christian building activity above the earth's surface and prior to the fourth century was not great. A number of factors would have militated against such activity, among them the modest size of the Christian community in most places, the problem of land ownership, and the legal status of Christianity within the Empire.

In matters of architecture the pre-Constantinian phase of Christian history has been correctly designated the period of house-churches. We know that Christians gathered originally in the Temple, Lk. 24/53, Acts 2/46, 3/1, 5/42, and in the open hall east of the Temple precinct, Acts 3/11, 5/12, cf. Jn. 10/23, and that they disputed with Jews in their synagogues, Acts 6/9ff. (Stephen), Acts 3/5, 3/14, 14/1, 16/13, 17/2, 17/10, 17/17, 18/4, 18/19, 18/26, 19/8 (Paul), Acts 18/28 (Apollos). To fulfill his mission to the Gentiles, Paul appeared in private houses, Acts 13/7, 16/32, 24/24, 24/26, in open places, Acts 14/8ff., 17/19ff., 22/1ff., in the houses of the newly converted who opened their houses for his use, Acts 18/7, and in rented houses and halls, Acts 19/9, 28/30.

But more importantly, we are informed about the meeting of groups of Christians in the apartment or house of a community member, that is, the so-called "domus ecclesiae", house-church, or according to the paraphrase of a later source, the "domus in qua Christiani conveniebant."[28]

In Jerusalem the house of John Mark, *Acts* 12/12 appears to have been important.[29] Tradition records that a second century church building was constructed on Mt. Zion where this house had once stood; the latter was said to have had a front hall leading directly from the street, *Acts* 12/13ff., and a second floor, *Mk*. 14/15, *Lk*. 22/12. In Joppa Christians are reported to have used the house of Simon the Tanner, *Acts* 9/43, 10/9; in Damascus, the house of Ananias, *Acts* 9/10ff.; in Phillipi, the house of Lydia, *Acts* 16/15, 16/40; in Thessalonica, the house of Jason, *Acts* 17/5ff., cf. *Rm.* 16/21; in

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[28] The source which dates from the early period of the Donatist controversy (May 19, 303), appears in the so-called *Gesta apud Zenophilum*, Appendix I, of *S. Optati Milevitani Libri VII* (ed. C. Ziwsa), *CSEL* 26, 1893, 186, 187. Menetius Felix "flamen perpetuus", receives orders to confiscate the possessions of Christians in Cirta (Numidia): "cum ventum esset ad domum in qua christiani coveniebant, Felix flamen perpetuus curator Paulo episcopo dixit: proferte scripturas legis et, si quid aliud his habetis, ..." Paul is able to hand over a number of silver vessels (13 in toto), but only one codex which appears to have been housed in the triclinium. Possibly Scripture was read at meals?

[29] W. Rordorf, *art.cit*., 113.

Corinth, the house of Stephen, I Cor. 16/15, cf. 1/16, and the house of Gaius, Rom. 16/23. In Corinth, the refugees from Rome, Aquila and Prisca, made their house available to the church, I Cor. 16/19. In Troas, Christians gathered for their Sunday liturgy on the third floor of an unspecified house, Acts 20/7ff. At Colossae, Nympha and Philemon opened their houses to Christian assemblies, Col. 4/15, Philem. 2. In other words, the evidence seems reasonably clear, namely that the earliest generations of Christians gathered in houses which belonged to members of the community.

From our sources we learn next to nothing about the specific architectural character of a given house church. Like the Dura house church, these buildings were almost certainly variants of the local domestic architecture. Our sources also remain silent on the subject of interior modifications which might have been introduced in order to accommodate Christian purposes. Excavations conducted earlier in this century on the *insulae* which lie beneath the oldest Roman *tituli* have proved inconclusive in this matter.[30] We are not entirely sure of the use of all the rooms in the Dura house church, although it seems likely that at least all of the rooms on the first floor had been adapted to expressly Christian usage by the time the building was destroyed.[31] The fact that Christians did not construct a separate ecclesiastical architecture from the beginning of their religion should not be construed in support of the notion that Christians were ascetically opposed to the idea of a religious architecture (the apologists to the contrary notwithstanding). Instead this fact should be seen in its proper context, as an expression of the social and economic circumstances which characterized the new and insignificant sect.

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[30] J.P. Kirsch, *Die römischen Titelkirchen im Altertum*, Paderborn, 1918. According the Optatus, *op.cit* 39 (Liber II) there were forty churches in Rome in A.D. 312. Probably half of them were in the city, and the others were coemeterial churches. It has been suggested that

Gradually, during the second and third centuries, Christians did build structures which were expressly designed to house the Christian cult. Material evidence of such building activity does not survive, and the literary sources with which we must document this

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30 continued
eighteen of the municipal _Tituli_ were of pre-Constantinian origin; cf. A.M. Schneider, "Die ältesten Denkmaler der Römischen Kirche", _Festschrift zur Feier des zweihundertjahrigen Bestehens der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen II_, _Phil.-hist. Klasse_, Göttingen, 1950, 195. Excavations under the Roman _Tituli_ revealed the earlier existence of _insulae_, but positive evidence of a Christian presence in these structures is wanting.

[31] _Final Report VIII/2_, 3-39.

development are scanty and difficult to assess.[32]

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[32] W. Rordorf, art.cit., 122ff., gives written evidence of structures which had been built in the third century expressly as church buildings; the evidence for separate existence of church buildings in Phrygia, Apamea in Pisidia, Arbela and Edessa, i.e., Rordorf, art.cit., 124notes 57,58,59,60 is either problematic, or in the case of the Chronicle of Arbela unacceptable. The latter mentions that the Bishop Isaac (A.D. 126-136) built a "temple" (ܗܝܟܠܐ), but the Chronicle is itself a forgery composed by Bishop Alphonse Mingana at the turn of the century; cf. J.M. Fiey, "Auteurs et dates de la Chronic d'Arbeles", OS 12, 1967, 265-302; J. Assfalg, "Zur Textüberlieferung derChronik von Arbel. Beobachtungen zu ms. or. forl. 3126," OC 50, 1966, 19-36. For the year A.D. 201 the Chronicle of Edessa records: "... and (the waters) also destroyed the temple of the assembly of the Christians..." (ܘܣܚܦܘ ܗܘܘ ܐܦ ܠܗܝܟܠܐ ܕܥܕܬܐ ܕܟܪ̈ܣܛܝܢܐ), L. Hallier, "Untersuchungen über die Edessenische Chronik," TU 9/1, Leipzig, 1892, 146. W. Bauer, Rechtgläubigket und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum, Tübingen, 1964 (2nd.ed.), 17ff., wants to reject the idea that there was a separately established church building in Edessa at the beginning of the third century. Bauer regards the statement in the Chronicle as a later Christian interpolation; according to Bauer it was "das Heiligtum der Kirche der Christen" or alternately, "die heilige Kirche der Christen" which was washed away by the flooded Daisan. But this is not what the Syriac reads; the correct translation, "the temple of the ecclesia of the Christians" is not an inconceivable phrase from the pen of a pagan chronicler. In its present form the Edessene Chronicle was composed by a Nestorian Christian toward the end of the sixth century. Bauer argues that this scribe transposed events which occurred in the sixth century to the third century and thus made it sound as if there were an organized form of Christianity, replete with separate cult edifice, in the Edessa in the early third century. But there could have been an authentic short entry concerning "the temple of the ecclesia of the Christians" in the original chronicle as reworked in the sixth century. In any event, Bauer's (misleading) translation does not prove his point. There may or may not have been such a "temple of the ecclesia" in A.D. 201.

Probably the extent of Christian building activity prior to the fourth century was not great in most places.

A great deal has been written about Constantine's building program and about the period in the history of architecture which he inaugurated.[33] Historians like Deichmann who imagine that primitive Christianity was ascetically opposed to sacred architecture also imagine that Constantine "secularized" Christian architecture. According to this view Constantinian architecture is like Constantinian Christianity, i.e., quasi-pagan. From the fourth century onward qualities which were thought to characterize the pagan temple were attributed to Christian church buildings. This fact is taken as evidence that Christianity and Christian architecture had capitulated to paganism under Constantine. Underlying this interpretaion is the belief that there was a radical discontinuity between apostolic Christianity and its inheritance in the fourth century.

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[33] R. Krautheimer, "The Constantinian Basilica", DOP 21, 1967, 115-140 (with selected bibliography), and by the same author, "Constantine's Church Foundations", AttiVII. CIAC, 237-255; J.B. Ward-Perkins, art.cit., 3-27. For the terminological transformation to which Deichmann refers, i.e., Eusebius' attribution of pagan characteristics to Christian buildings, cf. L. Voelkl, "Die konstantinischen Kirchenbauten nach Eusebius," RivAC 29, 1953, 49-66, 187-206, and by the same author, "Die konstantinischen Kirchenbauten nach den literarischen Quellen des Okzidents," RivAC 30, 1954, 99-136.

Constantine was certainly an innovator, in architecture and elsewhere. But his innovativeness should not be so overstated as to obscure what real threads of continuity unite the pre-Constantinian with the post-Constantinian periods. In an important article (ignored by Deichmann), entitled "Kirche als Name für den christlichen Kultbau. Sprach-und Kulturgeschichtliches zu den Bezeichnungen κυριακόν, οἶκος κυριακός, dominicum, basilica", F.J. Dölger showed that there were already indications in the Christian literature of the second and third centuries that Christians attributed sacred characteristics to their cult buildings.[34] Christians were not supposed to have done this, according to the apologists.

In effect, Deichmann's theory of Christian architecture, and all theories like it, rests upon presuppositions which can not be verified in the sources. That primitive Christians ascetically rejected sacred architecture, both in theory and in practice, is saying too much. The apologists lampooned their pagan neighbors for believing in sacred architecture, but then the apologists had their own special axe to grind. Otherwise the positive evidence is that Christians did not build separately constituted church buildings in any extent prior to the fourth century; instead they made do with whatever buildings happened to be available to them, which meant in most cases, the houses of community members. But this does not bespeak ascetic rejection of sacred architecture; to the contrary it suggests that Christians accommodated their assemblies in a practical manner to the spaces which happened to be available. Constantine's building program is regarded by Deichmann as "...Paganisierung...Rückfall in Überwundenes..."; his creations were "...dem Urchristentum fremd..."[35] This is surely imputing too great a degree of innovativeness to Constantine. After all, long before Eusebius and Constantine there had been Christians who

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[34] F.J. Dölger, "Kirche als Name fur den christlichen Kultbau. Sprach-und Kulturgeschichtliches zu den Bezeichnungen κυριακόν, οἶκος κυριακός, dominicum, basilica," *AC* 6/3, 1941, 161-195, and by the same author, "Unserer Taube Haus. Die Lage des christlichen Kultbaues nach Tertullian", *AC* 2, 1930, 41-56. In *AC* 6/3, 1941, 168, 169, Dölger suggested that Clement, Tertullian, and Origen attributed sacred characteristics to Christian cult buildings (and hence reflected a widespread practice?). Dölger suggested that Antony (between A.D. 251 and 285) knew a Sahidic word which denoted the sacredness of the Christian cult edifice, but this does not seem likely; cf. H.I. Bell, "Evidences of Christianity in Egypt during

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34 continued
the Roman Period", HTR 37, 1944, 185-208, and P. Kahle, Bala'izah, London, 1954, 257-263.

[35] W. Deichmann, art.cit., 57.

believed that a mere building, made by human hands, could be invested with a very special dignity, could become, by its close and intimate association with God a sacred thing. An example is Tertullian who was hardly inclined to miss the subtleties of language; on more than one occasion he called the building in which Christians gathered by the name, "domus dei," *Ux*. 2/8/3, *Idol*. 5/1, 7/1, *Pud*. 7/20.[36]

7. *The other arts*.

The bearing of early Christian architecture on our subject needed to be considered separately because of the special character of the evidence (or lack of evidence) and because of the extravagant claims which have been made in the name of that evidence. But in addition to architecture, there survives a separate corpus of early third century monuments, and the evidence from this corpus leads to more positive results in the matter of establishing attitudes toward visual arts and images.

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[36] Tertullian avoids the use of the term, "templum" to denote the Christian cult edifice. Heuses "templum" primarily in a realistic sense to refer to the pagan building and secondarily in a metaphorical sense to denote the Jerusalem temple, e.g., *Marc*. 3/7/7, 4/9/9, 4/12/5, 4/35/10, 4/36/1, 4/39/19, 4/42/5, 5/3/5, 5/9/7, *Res*. 22/3, *Iei*. 10/2,3, 16/2, *Iud*. 13/6/14,15, *Mon*. 8/3, 14/1, *Nat*. 1/11/3,4, *Prax*. 21/6, *Ap*. 26/3, *Or*. 25/4, *Bapt*. 18/2, *Carn*. 2/2, or the "ecclesia", e.g., *Marc*. 3/7/3,7, 3/20/9, 3/23/2, 5/6/11, *Cor*. 9/2, *Cult*. 2/1/1, *Iud*. 14/3,9, 13/25, *Mon*. 8/3, *Pud*. 1/9, 6/17, 15/7, 16/1,2, 18/13, 21/2, or Christ, e.g., *Pud*. 15/7, 16/7,8, *Marc*. 3/21/3, 3/24/10, 4/35/11, *Res*. 10/4, 18/6, 44/4, *Iud*. 13/15, or "homo/corpus", e.g., *Marc*. 5/6/12, *Ux*. 2/3/1, *An* 53/5, *Iei*. 16/8.

In the following discussion I will refer to this corpus as a relative unity. In reality it is not a unity, but as Appendix I makes clear, is instead a collection of diverse and dissimilar kinds of artifacts and monuments. There are certainly as many or more criteria by which these monuments may be judged to be dissimilar than there are criteria by which they may be judged to be unified. Each object has its own special character (with the possible exception of clay lamps, the typologies of which tend to absolute uniformity).

But I am restricting my discussion of these objects to one kind of criticism only and will view them from just one perspective, namely from the perspective of iconology. Thus, I will not discuss the issues of chronology, provenance and circumstances of discovery, iconography, identification, authenticity, style and place in a typological series, social and economic circumstances of fabrication. To be sure these are all subjects of fundamental importance, and it is utterly impossible to undertake iconological criticism without the necessary pre-iconological analysis and classification which each of these issues represents. But we are concerned in this study with a special problem and, in so far as monuments provide part of the primary evidence toward its solution, that solution can only be reached by viewing the monuments from the perspective of iconological synthesis. Naturally, this presupposes that we know what we are talking about, namely that we know the history of the oldest surviving Christian monuments in as much detail as is possible. But our purpose here is not to write a history of early third century Christian art; the essential historical information is provided only in Appendix I.

The term, iconology, is a favorite among art historians. It requires a word of clarification. Prior to this century the terms, iconography and oconology, were used interchangeably; evidence of this is provided, for instance, in the most famous of the iconographic/ iconologic treatises, Ceasar Ripa's Iconologia, Rome, 1593.[37] Iconographic and iconologic studies have been primarily (though not exclusively) concerned with Christian art and normally have included descriptions and classifications of Christian subject matter together with interpretations of the symbolic or allegorical meaning embodied in the subject matter.[38]

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[37] Jan Białostocki, "Iconography and Iconology", EWA 7, 769-785.

In modern historiography the use of the term, iconology, in distinction to iconography, is determined first and foremost by Erwin Panofsky's tripartite critical typology which he elaborated in its definitive form in his Studies in Iconology, N.Y., 1939.[39] The second level of Panofsky's typology concerns what we today conventionally call iconography, i.e., the descriptive identification, analysis, and classification of subject matter. The third level of Panofsky's typology concerns iconology and is what concerns us here, namely the synthetic identification of the meaning and content of a given iconographic corpus. Hence, in the present discussion we are concerned not with identification and analysis of individual iconographic themes as such, but instead our attention is focussed on the synthesis of basic principles which underlie all of Christian iconography prior to the mid-third century. Iconological synthesis presupposes iconographic analysis, builds upon it, and attempts to go beyond it in one sense, namely to establish an integral interpretation of an entire collection of objects despite their obvious idiosyncracies and differences. Viewed from the perspective of their common iconolgoy, the oldest surviving monuments of Christianity may be said to constitute at least a relative unity. All of these monuments share a common meaning.

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[38] G.J. Hoogewerff, "L'iconologie et son importance pour l'étude systématique de l'art chrétien", RivAC 8, 1931, 53-82.

[39] Also by Panofsky, cf. "Zum Problem der Beschreibung und Inhaltsdeutung von Werken der bildenden Kunst", Logos 21, 1932, 103-119. Panofsky's iconological study owed a considerable debt to Ernst Cassirer; cf. his "Der Begriff der symbolischen Form im Aufbau der Geisteswissenschaften", Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg, 1, 1921/1922, 11-39. For further literature, cf. Białostocki, art.cit., 781-785.

On the face of it the iconological interpretation of Christian art prior to the fourth century is an impossibly bewildering subject. Part of the bewilderment is due to ignorance of the sources and is justified; we are poorly informed about so many of the historical and archaeological circumstances which produced the oldest surviving Christian monuments. But another part of the bewilderment is less justified; it is the result of paying undue attention to theoretical reconstructions which are interlaced with confessional bias and which ought to have been discarded years ago.

The dogmatic-didactic approach is a case in point; it will remain forever associated with J. Wilpert, its most intrepid defender and exponent.[40] According to this interpretation early Christian art was conceived and executed primarily for didactic purposes. The content of its teaching was dogma, specifically Roman dogma which was enshrined in the infallible teaching of the papacy. In reality the oldest surviving Christian iconography contains very little that could be correctly construed as dogma, whether dogma understood as a formal, solemn, and explicit pronouncement of the church, or whether dogma understood more loosely and more informally as simply a matter of Christian belief or practice, related in some way to one or another of the major issues in the history of dogma.[41]

The Christian iconography of the early third century has a very strong soteriological thrust, and it has been persuasively argued that this is an expression of the Christology of the early church in which the divinity of Jesus Christ and his saving significance for us were such closely interrelated (although separate) themes. Almost every Christology has its soteriological components, but it is certainly correct to emphasize the central importance of soteriology as a determinative factor in the establishment and development of Christology in the early church. God had become man so that man might be elevated to the status of godliness or, as Irenaeus writing at the end of the second century expressed it, Jesus Christ our Lord, in his boundless love, has become what we are in order that he might make us to be perfect as he himself is.[42]

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[40] On Wilpert, cf. Chapter One, 36ff.

[41] The most extensive effort to set Christian art within the context of the history of dogma (esp. Christology) and within the context of the history of spirituality is W. Elliger's, Die Stellung der alten Christen zu den Bildern in den ersten vier Jhdten. 2, Zur Enststehung und frühen Entwicklung der altchristlichen Bildkunst, Leipzig, 1934. Also important is Gerke's intellectual history which, however, is based on funerary sources only; cf. F. Gerke, "Ideengeschichte der ältesten christlichen Kunst", ZKG 49, 1940, 1-102.

We know enough about the historical significance of Christian iconography to assert that the importance of soteriology in the formative stages of the tradition are beyond doubt. If this art has any central and unitive meaning at all (which I believe it does), then it is certainly salvation. There is however a major impediment in every effort to establish a clear correlation between the iconographic expression of soteriology and its Christological expression, as reported to us in the literature of the early church. If the soteriological concern which informs so much of the oldest surviving

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[42] Sancti Irenaei, Libros quinque adversus Haereses (ed. W.W. Harvey), Cambridge, 1857, Bk. V (Praefatio), 314: "qui propter immensam suam dilectionem factus est quod sumus nos, uti nos perficeret esse quod et ipse."

Christian iconography is really to be understood as the correlative expression of Christological salvation motifs, why does Jesus figure so incidentally in this iconography?[43] We would expect the opposite. If salvation is the central focus of this iconography (which surely it is), and if the specific form of salvation contemplated in this iconography is delivered by Jesus Christ, then why is there not more interest in delineating the visual form of the _soter_ himself?

It might be argued that the oldest surviving Christian iconography is connected to the history of dogma and spirituality because of the prominent sacramental and cultic themes which it contains. But the only sacrament which unquestionably appears in this iconography is baptism. The representation of the eucharist is problematic; allusions to the eucharist are probably present in this iconography but are difficult to test. Many or even most of the meal scenes which figure so prominently in the iconography of the Roman catacombs and in early Christian sculpture may be representations of refrigerium meals, celebrated at the gravesite.[44]

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[43] J. Kollwitz, "Christusbild", _RlAC_ 3, 4, expressed this fact correctly: "Für das dritte Jhdt. tritt die Person Christi (in the visual arts) fast ganz hinter der durch ihn gebrachten Erlösung zurück..."; also by Kollwitz, cf. _Das Christusbild des 3. Jahrhunderts_, Münster, 1953. In the third century Jesus appears under the guise of generic types, the shepherd, Orpheus, the teacher-philosopher, the magician (with _virgula_ in hand). The Christians who portrayed Jesus were interested in his role as _soter_, in the actions which he performed on their behalf, but showed little interest in exposing in visual terms his special personal characteristics, his historical person and special form of divinity. There is an important correlation here between the so-called functional Christology (which is not technically Christology) of the pre-Constantinian period and the visual representation of Jesus. On functional Christology, cf. O. Cullmann, _Die Christologie des Neuen Testamentes_, Tübingen, 1957.

We can be certain of one point, namely that the sacrament of baptism is represented in the oldest surviving Christian iconography, both in painted and sculpted form; baptism is of course related to the mainstream of the history of dogma by way of ecclesiology, although the explicit connection between the sacraments and ecclesiology is a product of the later history of the church.[45] In the history of the early church the understanding of Christian baptism was in the process of evolution, and it is well-known that there was more than one theology of baptism and that more than one liturgical form was employed in the ministration of the sacrament.[46] We do not know which theology of baptism determined which visual image in the early third century. This is one of the enduring difficulties in the laudable official report of the Dura house church, as E. Kraeling, its author, readily admitted.[47]

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[44] Cf. Chapter One, 41ff.

[45] M. Schmaus, Katholische Dogmatik 4/1, Die Lehre von den Sakramenten, Munich, 1957 (5th ed.), 121-186.

[46] C.R. Beasley-Murray, Baptism in the New Testament, London, 1962; A. Benoit, Le baptême chrétien au second siècle, Paris, 1953; P. Lundberg, La typologie baptismale dans

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46continued

l'ancienne Église, (Acta Sem. Neotest. 10), Uppsala, 1942; J. Thomas *Le mouvement baptiste en Palentine et en Syrie 150 avant J.C., -300 après J.C.*, Gembloux, 1935.

[47] *Final Report VIII/2*, 177ff. T. Klauser, *JbAC* 10, 1967, 104-107, has argued that the Christians at Dura were baptist sectarians. Primary baptism was performed in the Euphrates; secondary ablutions and lustrations were per- prior to the community meal in the font of room 6. Since, according to Klauser, the Christians at Dura were in reality Jewish Christian, baptist sectarians, the Old Testament must have been their primary written source of doctrine and spirituality; secondarily they may have relied on a Jewish Christian gospel; Klauser suggests the *Gospel of the Nazareans*. Probably they did not know the *Gospel of John* and hence would not have been familiar with the figure of the Johannine Jesus the good shepherd. Klauser believes that they would have construed the shepherd-criophoros image on the lunette over the baptismal basin in the light of Yahweh's philanthropic shepherding of his flock, Israel. Klauser's rather elaborate reconstruction of the character of Christianity at Dura is all an inference build on the missing water conduit; since there was no water conduit running from the baptismal basin, the conditions of the *Didache* 7/1 (βαπτίσατε ... ἐν ὕδατι ζωντι ....) could not be fulfilled. Klauser does not quote *Didache* 7/2 (ἐὰν δὲ μὴ ἔχης ὕδωρ ζῶν εἰς ἄλλο ὕδωρ βάπτισον· εἰ δ᾽ οὐ δύνασαι ἐν ψυχρῷ, ἐν θερμῷ! ἐὰν δὲ ἀμφότερα μὴ ἔχης, ἔκχεον εἰς τὴν κεφαλὴν τρὶς ὕδωρ......) which provides for other forms of baptism if running water is not available. The baptizand could have been initiated by standing in the basin and having

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water poured over his head. In fact we know that this was done in the early fourth century from the evidence provided by the well-known marble plaque from Aquileia which shows a baptizand standing in a large stone fluted basin; cf. J.M.C. Toynbee, *JThS* 20/1, 1969, 293, and *Final Report 8/1*, 148. There is no question that baptism was an important and central aspect of Christian belief at Dura; the absence of the water conduit does not, however, prove that the specific character of the Christianity there was a form of baptist sectarianism or that it was Jewish Christian in its theology. By isolating Dura from the contemporary Christian monuments in the West, Klauser can then underscore his major point, namely the symbolic identification of the shepherd-*criophoros* figure on the lunette over the baptismal font. It seems to me that Klauser's point of departure in the analysis of the Dura house church is misconceived. The striking fact of the Dura baptistery in particular is not that its pictorial imagery is so different from the monuments of the West but that this imagery has so many parallels; cf. L. de Bruyne, "Le decoration des baptisteres paléochrétiens," *AttiV. CIAC*, 341-369. It may be that the Christians at Dura did not know the *Gospel of John*, but they did know Tatian's *Diatessaron*, and hence would not have been altogether unfamiliar with the image of Jesus as shepherd. There is no certain external evidence concerning the early presence of Jewish Christians in the Mesene. Kraeling, *Final Report 8/2*, suggested that Jewish Christians may have fled to Mesene from Palestine during the Roman Jewish war under Hadrian, but this was merely a thought. F.C. Burkitt, *CAH* 12 (1st.ed.), 495-496, suggested that Christians came to Mesene directly from Edessa, but this also is lacking in source critical confirmation. All of the three traditions concerning the foundation of Christianity in Mesene are without historical value; cf. J. Labourt, *Le Christianisme dans l'Empire Perse sous la Dynastie Sassanide (224-632)*, Paris, 1904, 1-17. Mani's knowledge of Christianity may suggest a Christian presence in or around Seleucia-Cteisiphon toward the middle of the third century. Until further evidence, whether external or internal, is provided, it seems to me sensible to proceed in the analysis of Christianity at Dura with what is known (and not with what is not known). The evidence from the paintings suggest strong ties between Christianity at Dura and Christianity in the West.

Kraeling sets about to explain the theology of baptism, and hence the meaning of the images on the walls of the baptistery, in the light of "the local and regional associations of baptism".[48] The sources which he adduces include the six Catechetical Lectures delivered in the mid-fourth century at Jerusalem by the Archbishop Cyril, the two sermons, De sacramentis and De Fide (also known as the Catechetical Homilies), by Theodore, bishop of Mopsuestia during the years A.D. 392-428, probably delivered while he was still a priest at Antioch between the years A.D. 388 and 392, the Syriac Liturgical Homilies of Narsai, founder of the school of Nisibis (died A.D. 502), the Explicationis mysteriorum Ecclesiae by Giwargi, bishop of the Arabs (died A.D. 724), the Odes of Solomon, of uncertain date and provenance, the Syriac Hymni in Festum Epiphaniae, composed by Ephraem who lived in Nisibis and Edessa (died A.D. 373), and selected Syriac liturgical rituals.[49] How do we know that these texts provide the proper "dogmengeschichtliche" backdrop for the explanation of the images in the baptistery? How do we know that Syriac speaking Christians set the theological and spiritual tone of the new religion in this particular place? Of the graffiti which survive and which are in the least way intelligible, one is possibly in Syriac script (no.3), five are in Greek script, and five are in Latin script.[50] Kraeling wants to see the images in the baptistery in the light of "Eastern", especially Syriac Christian influences and wants to oppose the so-called "Eastern" conception of baptism, which is illuminationist, personal, and demonstrative, to the western conception (Tertullian) which is juridical, dogmatic, moralizing, and reflects the authority of the institutionalized church.[51] Personally I cannot see how most of Kraeling's literary documentation relates to the paintings in the baptistery any more than would, e.g., the baptismal teachings contained in the writings of Justin, Hippolytus, or Irenaeus. I also cannot see how the baptismal paintings at Dura (or for that matter the effect which the entire baptistery makes upon its occupants) are in context qualitatively different from the contemporary Christian paintings in Rome. It is well-known that similarities are striking, especially when one considers the distance between the two places and when one considers the functional differences between the catacomb paintings (cult of the dead) and the baptismal paintings (cult of the living). Dura, after all, was a Roman colonia built in castrum form over a previously existing Syrian village; it had commercial and military importance. Kraeling's proposal to treat the baptismal paintings in terms of "local and regional associations" sounds reasonable, but in reality may misrepresent the social and religious composition of the Christian community there.

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[48] Final Report 8/2, 178.

[49] Final Report 8/2, 179.

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[50] Final Report 8/2, 89-97 ("Graffiti and Dipinti", by C.B. Welles).

[51] Final Report 8/2, 178, 200.

It is important to establish points of contact between the history of dogma or the history of spirituality and the oldest surviving monuments of Christianity, but in practice it is very difficult to do this convincingly. The history of dogma and the history of spirituality during the first and second centuries (which are the relevant centuries for the explanation of the monuments of the early third century) do not lend themselves easily to geographical and regional classification. Of course there were regional Christian schools but the representatives of these schools were frequently in places other than their points of origin. For instance, Gallic Christianity during the second century consisted of Gauls, Italic peoples, Celts, and Greek speaking peoples from Ionia; its most important leadership was exercised by Irenaeus who was from Asia

Minor and hence the school of Asia Minor was determinative in setting the tone of Gallic theology and spirituality.

Naturally, the ethnic, social, and intellectual composition of Christianity in Rome was even more variegated. Our knowledge of the eucharistic liturgy which was celebrated in Rome during the second century comes from Hippolytus who spoke and wrote (between the years A.D. 200-235) Greek and who, according to Photius, was the student of Irenaeus, probably in Lyons (ca. A.D. 190) and not either in Rome or in Asia Minor.[52] What came to be known as "typically Roman" theology, i.e., the theology for which Kraeling has no special fondness, was neither Roman or Italic in origins but was imported to the capital from Africa.[53]

One positive result of the dogmatic-didactic interpretation of the oldest surviving Christian monuments is the recognition of their religious character. But the iconography in question is not the translation of dogma into pictorial language, and Wilpert's persistence in this error only revealed his very limited grasp of the history of dogma. In summary, it is fair to say that the dogmatic-didactic interpretation of the oldest surviving Christian art deserves to be laid to rest, permanently, in the mausoleum of antiquated theories. There still is another candidate in this category, and it too deserves solemn and permanent interment, namely the historical-realistic interpretation which was expounded earlier in this century by the Swiss archaeologist, Paul Styger.[54]

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[52] A. von Harnack, Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Euseb II/2, Leipzig, 1958 (2nd. 3d.), 213.

[53] As pointed out by G. La Piana, "The Roman Church at the End of the Second Century", HTR 18, 1925, 201-277.

Probably Styger's most striking error was his failure to perceive the essentially religious character of early Christian art. Styger believed instead that the content of early Christian iconography was history and that this history had been represented in a literal and realistic manner. Styger argued that Christians had first painted pictures on the walls of their houses; these paintings portrayed realistically events which were known from history and which had been recorded in Scripture. He noted that the catacomb paintings have an abbreviated compositional character and took this to be proof of his theory; the catacomb paintings were simply secondary copies of the originals which had been executed in a domestic context. Almost in spite of himself, Styger avowed that the funerary images in question were symbolic in character; he argued that during the trnasposition of images from house to grave the original historical and narrative character of the image had been abandoned or reduced in favor of abbreviated compositions (i.e., Weidlé's signitive art) which are so well-known from the Roman catacombs and from early Christian sarcophagi.

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[54] P. Styger, Die altchristliche Grabeskunst. Versuch einer einheitlichen Auslegung, Munich, 1927, and by the same author, "Die altchristliche Kunst. Grundlegende Erörterungen über die Methode der Datierung und Auslegung", ZKT 53, 1929, 545ff. The criticism of Styger's work was given by J.P. Kirsch, "L'Archeologia Cristiana, suo carattere proprio e suo metodo scientifico", RivAC 4, 1927, 49-58, and by the same author, "Der Ideengehalt der ältesten sepulkralen Darstellungen in den römischen Katakomben," RQ 36, 1928, 1-20.

Historical imagery had been reduced to "äusserste Ökonomie, die fast an symbolhafte Kürze grenzt".[55] Styger's argument was as circuitous when it was expounded it as it is today, and is a theory which has found relatively little support.[56] Christian iconography is indeed abbreviated in composition, but there is no evidence that the abbreviated funerary imagery which survives from the catacombs derived from earlier historical and narrative models that had been painted originally in private houses. The use of the former to prove the existence of the latter is simply unacceptable. The primary existence of early Christian painting in a domestic context during the second century is not an impossibility; but there is at present no rational way of testing this hypothesis. What we presently know about the history of early Christian iconography plainly contradicts Styger's theory. It is almost certain that the oldest images which appeared in a Christian context were symbolic in character; narrative, historical illustration developed only as a secondary and later phenomenon in the history of early Christian art.

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[55] P. Styger, op.cit., 15.

[56] In support of Styger's theory was F. Thijssen, "De apologetische en dogmatische Betecknis der oudchristelijke Grafkunst", StC, 1928, 55ff.

Finally, it should be noted that Styger's realistic manner of interpreting images was built upon an insight which is fundamentally erroneous; it is the same error which characterizes T. Klauser's theory of symbol (cf. Appendix II). Styger argued that the catacomb paintings, which he took to be the secondary and abbreviated versions of an original historical narrative art, had acquired a fixed meaning once and for all in their original domestic context. In other words, despite the transmission of an image from one context to another, or from one generation and set of circumstances to the next, the meaning of a given image remains constant. Styger, like Klauser, failed to recognize that images become contaminated and acquire new levels of meaning relative to their new circumstances and the modifications which those circumstances introduce. Styger maintained for instance that the Christian images which had been originally conceived and executed in a domestic context to represent historical scenes realistically remained unaffected in their iconology when transposed to a funerary context.[57] This is such an extreme statement of iconographic fundamentalism, so obviously built on false premises, that it requires no further discussion here. In a somewhat similar manner Klauser has failed to recognize that iconological contamination can and does occur when an image, e.g., the shepherd-criophoros, is transmitted from one culture or religion to another and is thus modified by a new set of ideas and circumstances which were foreign to its original iconographic tradition.[58]

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[57] An intelligent discussion of this problem is contained in W. Elliger, op.cit., 22ff.

[58] On iconographic contamination cf. E. Löwy, "Typenwanderung", ÖJh 12, 1910, 243-304.

The two above-mentioned interpretations of the oldest surviving Christian iconography, the dogmatic-didactic and the historical-realistic, cannot be verified in the sources and should be abandoned. Styger, in particular, was anxious to show that the iconography in question could not be derived from one idea alone. In a certain sense, this criticism was to the point when directed against Wilpert who consistently had only one idea, the wrong idea, which he employed to interpret virtually all of the early Christian art. But the final verdict on Styger's criticism must be that he introduced, at least for a while, more than a little methodological confusion into the iconologic and iconographic study of early Christian art (again the comparison with Klauser is more than casual).

Even today, there is no final consensus in the matter of the iconologic understanding of the Christian art of the early third century; a concise, clear-cut, and comprehensive statement of the options which are feasible in the light of the sources would be a very useful contribution to the literature of early Christian art. The limits and purpose of the present study do not permit such a statement here. On the other hand it is consistent with the stated purpose of this section to sketch in outline what the prominent components of such a statement would be.

These components are four in number. The first three of these concern the circumstantial characteristics of the oldest surviving Christian artifacts which are marked in any way with pictorial imagery. First, the relevant iconography has a strong if not predominant religious thrust. Thus the artifacts marked with this iconography are primarily testimony to a community of faith; they are "religious" objects, although they may have been conceived and executed to serve "secular" purposes, e.g., the lighting of a room through the means of a clay lamp.

Second, the iconography which concerns us here is predominantly symbolic in character.[59] All of its symbolism points to a central core of meaning (which is a separate point in itself and the fourth component in this outline). Although there is a close relationship in these images between the thing signified and its symbol, the image, there are no cult images *per se* in

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[59] This needs qualification. In all likelihood a considerable percentage of proto-Christian imagery is decorative in character. One commentator has gone so far as to suggest that all pictorial Christian imagery is decorative in nature; cf. L. de Bruyne, "Les 'lois' de l'art paléochrétienne comme instrument herméneutique", RivAC 35, 1959, 119. But this is a counsel of despair. It is reasonable to argue the decorative character of floral motifs and frame elements, but not all of the surviving iconography can be subsumed under this heading.

Christianity prior to the fourth century.[60] Hence there is no magical or quasi-sacramental identification of the relevant Christian symbolic images with ultimate power or the divinity. Everything points to the fact that these images were not worshipped or adored or venerated. They are symbolic images but not cult images; the thing symbolized and its symbol are reciprocally related though finally distinct.

Third, the vast majority of the oldest surviving artifacts marked with Christian iconography were discovered in funerary places; many of them had been designed and executed with funerary purposes in mind, and most of them had been placed in their funerary context in antiquity.[61]

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[60] This is important. Christians certainly placed their images in a cultic ambience (e.g., the catacombs where the funerary cult was enacted and the Dura house church where the initiation cult was performed). Considering the coincidence of image and cult in early Christianity and considering the ubiquity of cult images in all of the other then contemporary religious traditions (excluding Judaism) the absence of cult images in Christianity is all the more striking; cf. M. Nilsson, op.cit., 456ff.

[61] V. Schultze, Archäologische Studien über altchristliche Monumente, 1880, and by the same author, "Zur Deutung der Bildwerke altchristlicher Grabstätten", TStK 25, 1882, 720ff. Schultze pointed out that the iconological importance of images must be judged in the light of their function, which means, among other considerations, in the light of where they appear. Schultze's point has won general acceptance as is evidenced by the works of Dölger, Klauser, Quasten, or Stuiber.

Naturally this is not true of the paintings in the Dura baptistery which constitute an important exception. But, apart from Dura, the close relationship of the oldest surviving Christian iconography with funerary places and funerary purposes suggests that at least an important key (if not the most important key) to the meaning of this art is to be sought in the primitive Christian response to death.[62]

Fourth and lastly, the central core of meaning, to which I have referred above, is unlike any of the foregoing components. As defined, the latter are more or less circumstantial in character. The central core of meaning which unites all of the disparate objects that are marked with Christian imagery and that date to the period under consideration here is soteriology; salvation is the primary value. The oldest surviving Christian art is soteriological throughout; it is an art which expresses the confident hope and expectation that the Christian soul will be saved from death, personal destruction, and annihilation.[63]

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[62] Cf. Chapter One, 41ff. Irenaeus, op.cit. V/V/1ff. (Harvey ed. 330ff.) contains a discussion of Elijah, Jonah, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego as proofs of the resurrection. Similar passages are contained in Tertullian's de Resurrectione Mortuorum, chaps. 29, 32, 53, 58 (CC II, 921ff.)

[63] Cf. Chapter One, 41ff.

These four components constitute the essential points which need to be made in any general statement of the iconology of the oldest surviving Christian imagery. A great deal more could be said about each of these points; in fact the verification of this four-fold statement would require a lengthy and separate study. Since our purpose here is to determine what the evidence from the oldest surviving Christian monuments can tell us about attitudes toward images, it is not necessary to undertake a full-scale discussion of each of these points in detail. The explanation of them is already contained, at least in part, in Chapter One above. But a few further, concluding remarks must be made with reference to the matter of soteriology.

Early Christian iconography is optimistic in nature. Daniel is shown at prayer, safe amidst the lions who under normal circumstances would have eaten him; so also the shepherd who carries the sheep and is flanked by rapacious lions. These must have been powerful images, pregnant with immediate associations of meaning, for a people who had to face the possibility of being ripped apart in the amphitheatres of the Empire. Jonah comes through his ordeal, which is itself a kind of rite of passage, unharmed and is shown at rest, or, if the identification of the standing orans figure among the

Cleveland marbles is correct, he is shown at prayer, thanking God for his deliverance. In cubiculum A/2 of the Callixtus catacomb an unidentified deity appears in the storm scene and extends his right hand over the head of the praying figure who stands precariously on the deck of the boat which is being tossed about in the sea. Noah is shown in his box-like ark after the rain has stopped; by the presence of the bird we know that the restoration of dry land is imminent. At Dura Jesus is seen walking on water, extending his hand to Peter to prevent him from drowning. Also at Dura David is shown after his victory over his Philistine opponent, Goliath; by killing him David insures, almost magically, the victory of the Israelites over their opponents. At Dura, as in the west, the paralytic carries his pallet, restored from his condition of sickness unto death. Lazarus is shown alive, standing before his tomb or mausoleum, brought to life by Jesus the magician and miracle worker. Moses is seen striking the wilderness rock from which there issues a stream of life-giving water, saving the Israelites and their cattle. And finally, if we see in the shepherd-criophoros image a Christological type, at least potentially so, then this image like the above-mentioned examples concerns the sheep which was saved from the devouring jaws of the wolf.

All of this imagery shares a common theme. Portrayed are persons who have been saved, snatched from the jaws of death. The forms of death and personal destruction which are contemplated vary from the relatively violent, i.e., being swallowed up and eaten by beasts or sacrificed by one's father (Abraham/Isaac) to the more prosaic death through illness. The agency whereby the saving action occurs is not expressed in visual terms in the Old Testament paradigms (except in the above-mentioned storm scene which may or may not be an isolated event within the Jonah sequence). And in the New Testament paradigms, it is normally Jesus who is represented performing the saving action. Conventional subject matter is presented here symbolically; given the literary evidence which we have already surveyed above in Chapter One, I see no reason to doubt that we have before us conventional subject matter which is here applied symbolically, in the case of the catacombs, to the deceased, and in the case of the Dura baptistery, to the baptizand. What these images promise is nothing less than life after death or at any event escape from the inevitable permanence of death.

In summary the evidence from the oldest surviving monuments of Christianity indicates that Christians made symbolic images relative to their funerary and baptismal beliefs and practices from the third century onward. It hardly needs mentioning that this is itself _prima facie_ evidence of a positive attitude toward the religious uses of pictorial imagery, an attitude which was shared by Roman Christians and Christians elsewhere in the Empire by the early third century, and possibly earlier. But apart from the obvious, what else does the evidence from the oldest surviving monuments tell us about Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images? To answer this question it is necessary to investigate the kind of pictorial imagery and the content of the imagery which Christians made prior to the mid-third century. This we have already done. Then it becomes necessary to compare and, if possible, correlate the results of such an investigation with the oldest surviving written evidence of Christian concern in the matter of visual imagery. How does what we know from the written evidence compare and correlate with what we know from the unwritten sources? To answer this question we will turn to the concluding chapter of this study.

Appendix I

Descriptive catalogue of the oldest surviving Christian monuments (excluding so-called Jewish Christian monuments).

PAINTING

A. Bosio, *Roma sotterranea*, Rome, 1632 (not available to me). *Roma Subterranea Novissima* (Latin trans. of the Italian ed. by Paolo Aringhi), Rome, 1651.

G.B. de Rossi, *La Roma sotterranea cristiana descritta e illustrata*, Rome, 1864-1877.

R. Garrucci, *Storia dell 'arte cristiana*, Prato, 1873-1881.

J. Wilpert, *Die Malereien der Katakomben Roms*, Freiburg, 1903.

Johannes de Wit, *Spätrömische Bildnismalerei*, Berlin, 1928 (secondary importance).

P. Styger, *Die Römischen Katakomben*, Berlin, 1933. *Römische Märtyrergrüfte*, Berlin, 1935.

F. Wirth, *Römische Wandmalerei*, Berlin, 1934.

A.M. Schneider, "*Die ältesten Denkmäler der römischen Kirche*," *Festschrift zur Feier des zweihundertjährigen Bestehens der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, II, *Phil.-hist. Kl.*, Göttingen, 1951, 166-198.

M. Borda, *La Pittura Romana*, Milano, 1958.

J. Kollwitz, "Die Malerei der Konstantinischen Zeit", *Atti VII.CIAC*, 29ff.

Catacomb of St. Callixtus, via Appia Antica, 110.

Callixtus is the oldest and the largest of the Roman catacombs; G. de Angelis d'Ossat, *La Geologia delle Catacombe Romane*, Città del Vaticano, 1938, 209, counts 235 cubicula in Callixtus, covering an area of 61,060 sq. meters. Probably neither Callixtus nor his predecessor, Zephyrinus is buried in this catacomb; cf. Schneider, art.cit., 177. Judged by Roman standards, the catacomb is in a good state of preservation, and has been studied more intensively and with greater positive results, than any of the other third century Roman catacombs; cf. de Rossi, RS I, 225-351, II, III, 1-643. De Rossi's work on Callixtus was supplemented by J. Wilpert, Die Papstgräber und die Cäciliengruft in der Katakombe des hl. Kallistus (I Ergänzungsheft zu de Rossis RS), Freiburg, 1909. Corrections in the geological analysis of Callixtus, which had been originally provided as appendices to RS by de Rossi's brother, Michele Stefano, were made in this century by d'Ossat, op.cit. Corrections in the history of Callixtus were provided in this century by Styger, RK, and by L. Reekmans, La tombe du pape Corneille et sa région céméteriale, Città del Vaticano, 1964. Of the three levels in Callixtus, level two contains virtually all of the important, oldest paintings. Like other subterranean complexes in Rome and elsewhere, Callixtus is constituted out of a number of relatively independent original nucleii. The earliest of these on level two are found to the southeast and southwest: Regio I, the so-called crypt of Lucina, cf. Styger, RK, 21, together with the grave of Cornelius who may have been martyred in June of 253 while he was in exile. His corpse is thought to have been translated (after the pontificate of Gaius?) to Callixtus where it was interred not in the Crypt of the Popes but in the Lucina region, cf. L. Duschesne, Le Liber Pontificalis I, Paris, 1886, 150-152; Styger, RM, 97-108; Reekmans, op.cit., 109-124. Regio II is of unknown date. Regio III contains the famous Crypt of the Popes (Plan,IIIP), the adjoining retro sanctos, called the crypt of Caecilia (Plan, IIIRS), the so-called Chapels of the Sacraments (Plan, III,1-5), and the so-called crypt of Orpheus (Plan, III,8). Regio V contains the burial chamber of Pope Miltiades (Plan, V,11). Regio VI contains the burials of Pope Eusebius (Plan, VI,18) Pope Gaius (Plan, VI,19), and the martyrs, Calocerus and Parthenius (Plan, opp. VI,20). Regio VII contains the cubiculum of the deacon, Severus (Plan, VII,24, cf. de Rossi, RS III, Tav.4) and the so-called cubiculum of the five saints (Plan, VII,23). Regions V, VI, and VII are later developments northward beyond the original nucleus, Regio III. The oldest surviving wall paintings in the Callixtus complex are found in five of the so-called six Chapels of the Sacraments, in the Orpheus cubiculum, and in the four major cubicula within the Lucina area (Plan, I, 55-58). The chronology of these paintings is uncertain; the only absolute date for Regio III is 236 A.D., the epigraphic *terminus a quo* established by the oldest burial in the Crypt of the Popes; cf. Schneider, *art.cit.*, 176-182.

Paintings in the crypt of Lucina (Regio I)

55. (Cubiculum X)

Ceiling. Orans or gesticulating figure dressed in a *paenula*, birds, decorative vases--in fragmentary condition; *RS* I, Tav. XIV, *WMK*, Taf. 24/1.

Wall, upper register. Baptizand being helped out of the water, bird above to the left; *RS* I, Tav. XIV, *WMK*, Taf. 29/1.

56. (Cubiculum Y)

Ceiling. In the central, heavy framed medallion, Daniel as an orans between two seated, small lions; in the second zone are four *oscilla* on plants within pentagonal fields, four smaller *oscilla* within rectangular fields, and four vases of flowers within mandorla shaped fields; in the outside zone are two criophoros figures, two female orans figures, and four erotes, two in flight and two standing, each with a *thyrsos* or *pedum* in hand; *RS* I, Tav. VIII-XIII, *WMK*, Taf. 25.

Wall, middle register. To the left, sheep flanking a *mulctra* and to the right, birds; *RS* I, Tav. IX, XII, *WMK*, Taf. 24/2.

Loculus panel. Jonah reclining under the bower with the gourd plant, right hand rests on right leg, birds right and left; *RS* I, Tav. IX, *WMK*, Taf. 26/1. In calling this the gourd plant I have followed the traditions of the *Septuagint* and the *Vetus Latina* (*Itala*), κολόκυνθα -*cucurbita*. Whatever this relatively insignificant plant may have been (very unlikely the colocynth, *Citrullus Colocynthis*) it caused a great stir in the fourth century. The issue is important for early Christian archaeology because it reflects the considerable popularity of Jonah in literature, in song, and in art. Augustine reports in a letter addressed to Jerome, A.D. 403, that a certain Canterius, bishop of Oea sometime before A.D., 396, read in an assembly of Greek and Latin speaking Christians Jerome's new translation of the book of Jonah with the word *hedera* substituted for *cucurbita*. When Canterius read *hedera* a great commotion arose, the bishop was forced to solicit the opinion of the Jews of Oea who gave back the judgment that the rendering in the *Septuagint* (and the Latin translations derived from it) was correct, and finally Canterius returned to the older reading, which the people also knew from having sung it. So strongly did the people feel about the *cucurbita* rendering that they might have abandoned their bishop if he had not acquiesced to their demand: "Nam quidam frater noster episcopus, cum lectitari instituisset in ecclesia cui praeest, interpretationem tuam, movit quiddam longe aliter abs te apud Jonam prophetam (Jonae IV,6), quam erat omnium sensibus memoriaeque inveteratum, et tot aetatum successionibus decantatum. Factus est tantus tumultus in plebe maxime graecis arguentibus et inclamantibus calumnian falsitatis, ut cogeretur episcopus (Oea quippe civitas erat) Judaeorum testimonium flagitare. Utrum autem illi imperitia an malitia, hoc esse in hebraeis codicibus responderunt, quod et graeci et latini habebant atque dicebant. Quid plura? Coactus est homo velut mendositatem corrigere, volens, post magnum periculum, non remanere sine plebe....", *PL*, Tomus XXXIII, *Epistola* LXXI,Caput III/5, col. 242. Jerome, in his *Commentariorum in Ionam Prophetam*, had already explained his reason for preferring *hedera* to *cucurbita*, viz., ivy was more like the plant that was named in the Hebrew text than was a gourd plant, and in a characteristic aside he dismisses Canterius' adherence to *cucurbita* as evidence of the biship's surreptitious drinking habits: "Timuit (i.e. Canterius) uidelicet, ne si pro cucurbitis hederae nascerentur, unde occulte et tenebrose biberet, non haberet. Et reuera in ipsis cucurbitis uasculorum, quas uulgo saucomarias uocant, solent apostolorum imagines adumbrari....Sed ueniamus ad seria. Pro cucurbita, siue hedera in Hebraeo legimus ciceion, quæ etiam lingua Syra et Punica ciceia dicitur.... uoluimus idipsum Hebraeae linguae nomen exprimere, quia Latinus sermo hanc speciem arboris non habebat....", *CC*, LXXVI, IV/6/107. The incidental mention of images of the apostles which these Christians were accustomed to have represented on drinking cups is amply documented in the gold glasses of the fourth century, e.g., C.R. Morey, *The Gold Glass Collection of the Vatican Library*, Città del Vaticano, 1959. In a letter written to Jerome, A.D. 405, Augustine comes back to the *cucurbita*-*hedera* issue and states that, since neither *hedera* nor *cucurbita* are literal renderings of the Hebrew text, he would prefer to retain *cucurbita* since it is the term which is well known to the people (unlike *hedera*) and since it has a certain authority attached to it: "... et his qui meinvidere putant utilibus laboribus tuis, tandem aliquando, si fieri potest, intelligant, propterea me nolle tuam ex hebraeo interpretationem in ecclesiis legi, ne contra Septuaginat auctoritatem, tanquam novum aliquid proferentes, magno scandalo perturbemus plebes Christi, quarum aures et corda illam interpretationem audire consueverunt, quae etiam ab Apostolis approbata est. Unde et illud apud Jonam virgultum (Jonae IV,6) si in hebraeo nec hedera est, nec cucurbita, sed nescio quid aluid,...mallem jam in omnibus latinis cucurbitam legi....", *PL*, Tomus XXXIII, *Epistola* LXXXII, Caput V/35, col. 291. In the second book of his *Apology* against Jerome, A.D. 400, Rufinus of Aquileia testifies that Jerome's new translation of the book of Jonah with its substitution of *hedera* for *cucurbita* has direct consequences for the funerary monuments of Christians: "Post eaquam senuit mundus, et perurgentur cuncta ad finem, scribamus (i.e., if we were to accept hedera as the authoritative translation) etiam in sepulcris veterum, ut sciant et ipsi qui his aliter legerant, quia Jonas non habuit umbra cucurbitae, sed hederae; et iterum cum voluerit legislator, nec hederae, sed alterius virgulti...", *PL*, Tomus XXI, col. 613. In other words, there is good evidence that the plant which Yahweh caused to grow on the bower that shaded Jonah for a day was understood by Greek and Latin speaking Christians of the first three centuries to be the κολόκυνθα-*cucurbita*. This is confirmed abundantly by the archaeological sources, both painting and sculpture as well as in the minor arts, where Jonah is portrayed invariably in repose under a bower with a gourd plant; cf. a Ferrua, "Paralipomeni di Giona", *RivAC* 38, 1962, 7-69.

Loculus panel. Fish and baskets of bread; *RS* I, Tav. VIII, *WMK*, Taf. 27,28.

57. (Cubiculum C)
Ceiling. In a square circumscribed within a circle, a shepherd-criophoros, to the left, a sheep and a tree; in the second zone are garlands and vases; in the third zone are birds in each corner quarter circle; *RS* I, Tav XV, *WMK*, Taf. 35/2.

58. (Cubiculum E)
Ceiling. In a central medallion is a shepherd-criophoros with *pedum* and *mulctra* in the right hand, flanked by sheep; *RS* I, Tav. XVI, *WMK*, Taf. 66/2. In lapidary art the *mulctra* and the *pedum* as attributes of the shepherd-criophoros do not occur until the fourth century; cf. F. Gerke, *Die christlichen Sarkophage der vorkonstantinischen Zeit*, Berlin, 1940, 253.

Paintings in Regio III.

8. (Cubiculum L_2, so-called Orpheus cubiculum) The oldest surviving parallels are:

1. In Domitilla, *WMK*, Taf. 55 (now destroyed), illus. given in Bosio/Aringhi, *op.cit.*, I, 547. Orpheus is shown seated in a central octagon, holding a lyre in his left hand, surrounded by a lion, sheep, a horse, snake, peacock, mouse, salamander, turtle, birds and trees; in the second zone of the ceiling there are eight trapezoidal panels containing Biblical scenes; cf. R. Eisler, *Orphisch-dionysische Mysteriengedanken in der christlichen Antike*, Leipzig-Berlin, 1925, 50ff.

2. In Petrus and Marcellinus, over a doorway, *WMK*, Taf. 98

3. In 'ad duas lauras', discovered in 1957. Orpheus is depicted on the left of a lunette over an arcosolium grave, seated in a frontal position with a plectrum in the right hand and lyre in the left; cf. A. Ferrua, *Triplice Omaggio a SS. Pio XII*, Città del Vaticano, 1958, 49-64.

4. In Priscilla, seated Orpheus, same as no.3, head and shoulders destroyed; cf. G.B. de Rossi,

"Nuove scoperte nel cimitero di Priscilla per le escavazioni fatte nel 'anno 1887", *BACrist* 1887, 29-35, tav. 6; J. Wilpert, *RQ*, 1888, 91.

5. In Domitilla, on the lunette of an arcosolium grave, *WMK*, 229; a better illus, is given in J.B. Friedman, *Orpheus in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge, 1970, 42.

Ceiling. Seated Orpheus holding a lyre in a central octagon, sheep on the right side; in the outer zone, a sea monster, and four peacocks standing on vases--in fragmentary condition; *RS* II, Tav. X, XVIII/2, XXV/5, *WMK*, Taf. 37. Whether the peacock is to be understood as a symbolic or ornamental form in early catacomb painting is discussed by H. Lother, *Der Pfau in der altchristlichen Kunst*, Leipzig, 1929.

Paintings in the chapels of the Sacraments.

1. (Cubiculum A_2)

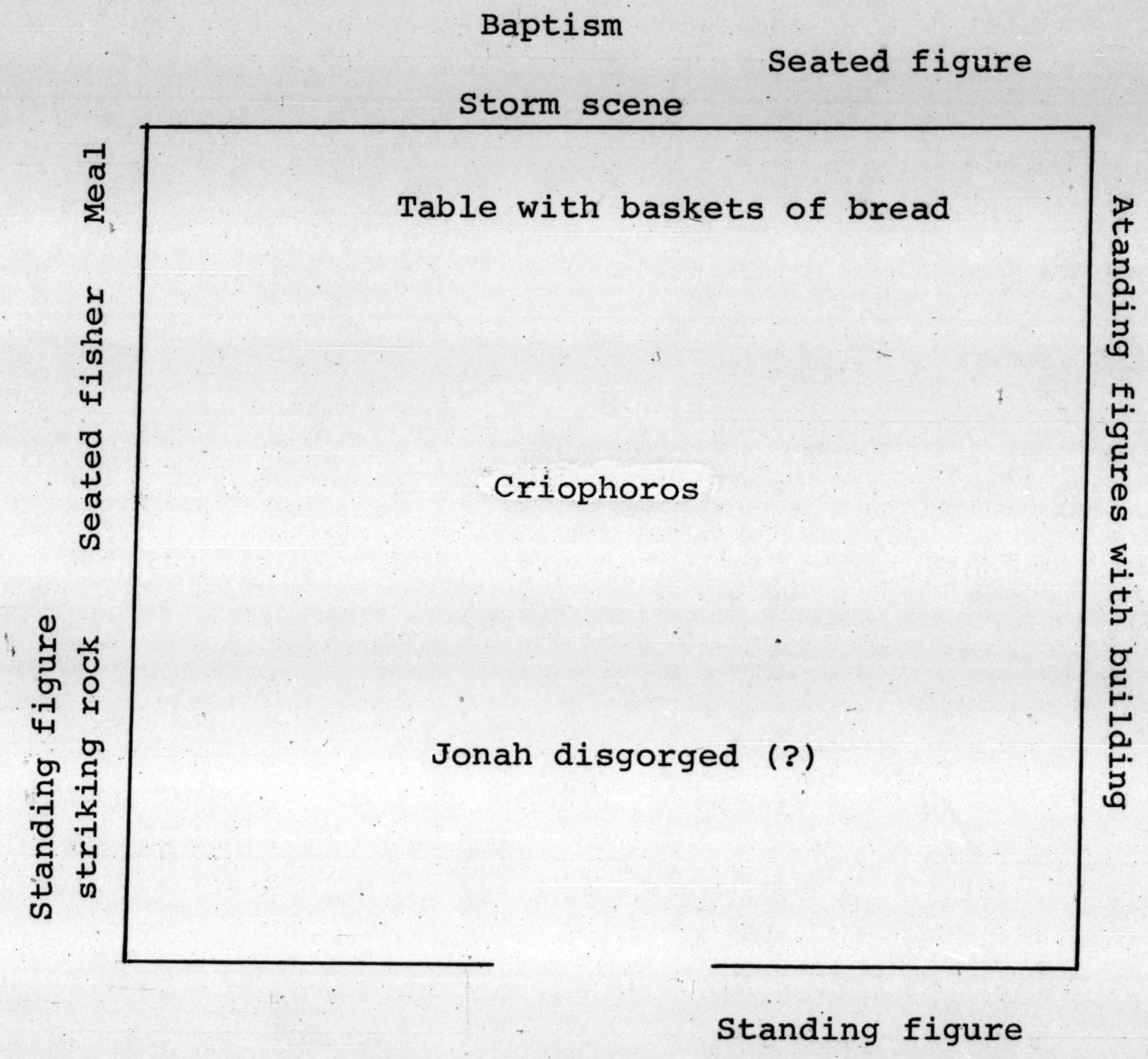
Ceiling. In a central medallion, shepherd criophoros flanked by sheep, olive trees (only the one to the right is visible); in the second zone, laurel garland interrupted by four vases; in the third zone, four peacocks, four *oscilla* within medallions, and within semi-circles, Jonah reclining under the bower, a three-legged table (τρίπους) with seven baskets of bread, and Jonah disgorged (not visible in *WMK*, Taf. 38, cf. R. Raffaele Garrucci, *op.cit.*, II, Tav. IV/2); also in the same zone are four trapezoidal panels with peacocks perched upon decorative vases; *RS* II, Tav. XI, XV/2, *WMK*, Taf. 38.

North wall, loculus panel, middle register, baptism in the form of *Impositio Manus*; *RS* II, Tav. XI, XV/6, *WMK*, Taf. 39/2. L. de Bruyne, "L'Imposition des mains dans l'art Chrétien ancien", *RivAC* XX, 1943, 212-47.

North wall, upper register, center, storm scene, orans figure in tunic standing on the left end of the boat, sails drawn up, swimming or drowning figure to the left of the boat, half figure of a god (God?) in a nimbus to the upper left extends right hand to the head of the orans figure, a flag or net is over the right end of the boat where the rudder is visible; *RS* II, Tav. XI, XV/1, *WMK*, Taf. 39/2, *WMS*, 22-24. I assume that this is part of a Jonah cycle without the

Paintings in the chapels of the Sacraments, cont.

Cubiculum A/2


Baptism
Seated figure
Storm scene
Table with baskets of bread
Meal
Seated fisher
Standing figure striking rock
Criophoros
Jonah disgorged (?)
Atanding figures with building
Standing figure

representation of Jonah being cast overboard; cf. J. Wilpert, Die Malereien der Sakramentskapellen in der Katakombe des heiligen Callistus, Freiburg, 1897, 23. On the unusual representation of God or a god (Sol?) laying his hand on the head of the praying figure on deck, cf., A. Krücke, "Zwei Beiträge zur Ikonographie des frühen Mittlelalters", MJbK 10, 1937, 6. Krücke adduces the well-known parallel piece, the Lateran Jonah sarcophagus no. 119.

North wall, upper right hand register, seated philosopher gesticulating, RS II, Tav. XI, XV/7, WMK, Taf. 39/2, WMS, Fig. 4.

West wall, middle register, loculus panel, Moses striking rock, seated fisher, meal scene at a sigma with fish, seven participants; RS Tav. XI, XV/3,4, WMK, Taf. 27/2. The earliest known appearance of Peter in the visual arts is found on the north wall of the baptistery at Dura Europos. A parallel representation in stone is found on the left end of a fourth century sarcophagus cover in the museum of the Callixtus catacomb, cf. F. Deichmann (G. Bovini, H. Brandenburg), Repertorium der christlichantiken Sarkophage, Wiesbaden, 1967, 173 Taf. 365. In both cases we are dealing with salvation paradigms in which Jesus is the active subject and Peter is incidental to the symbolic meaning of the scene. Apart from Dura, the earliest representations of Peter in the visual arts occur in the first half of the fourth century in the so-called Petrine trilogy: denial, arrest, miracle of the rock; cf. E. Dinkler, "Die ersten Petrusdarstellungen. Ein archäologischer Beitrag zur Geschichte des Petrusprimats", MJbK 11/12, 1938/39, 1-80; P.van Moorsel, "Il miracolo della roccia nella letteratura e nell 'arte paleocristiane", RivAC 40, 1964, 221-251. The third century scenes representing a figure strinking a rock are to be understood as Moses, a typological predecessor of Jesus and, in this case, of Christian baptism. The tradition which reports that Peter was incarcerated in the Mamertine prison is legendary. Peter is protrayed as having converted his two jailors, Processus and Martianus; a stream of water issues from the wall of his cell when he strikes it and it is with this water that Peter baptizes the two. This legend gives a Christian aetiology to the fountain, called the Tullianum, which flowed at the foot of the Capitoline from time immemorial. At some date after the fourth century or early fifth century this legend was inserted, rather awkwardly, into the text of the _Acta Petri_; cf. Pio Franchi de 'Cavalieri, _Note Agiografiche, Fasc.3_, _ST 22_, Roma, 1909, 35-39. The longer recension of the _Acta Petri_ is called the (pseudo) Linus text; cf. R.A. Lipsius, _Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha_, Leipzig 1891, 6-7, and by the same author, _Die Quellen der römischen Petrussage_, Kiel, 1872, 128-29.

East wall, middle register, loculus panel with two standing figures before a temple-like edifice (Lazarus); bird, and fish wound around a trident; _RS_ II, Tav. XV/5,8, _WMK_, Taf. 39/1. On the derivation of the Lazarus scene as a visual type cf., A. Hermann,"Ägyptologische Marginalien zur spatanantiken Ikonographie", _JbAC_ 5, 1962,60-69.

South wall, to the right of the entrance, a standing figure with an object in hand which may be a scroll; _WMS_, Fig.5, _WMK_, Taf. 40/3.

2. (Cubiculum A_3)

Ceiling. In the central medallion, shepherd-criophoros flanked by sheep and trees; in the second zone, stylized plants, garlands, and inverted shells; in the third zone, peacocks perched on decorative vases, garlands, decorative flower motifs, in the fourth zone, birds with ribbons in their claws, stylized vases, and in opposite corners enclosed within quarter circles, "bacchantes" with _thyrsos_ and drinking cup, and two _erotes_ with _thyrsos_ and torch; _RS_ II, Tav. XIII/3, XVIII/1. T. Klauser, "Entstenhungsgeschichte....", _JbAC_ 10, 1967, 84.

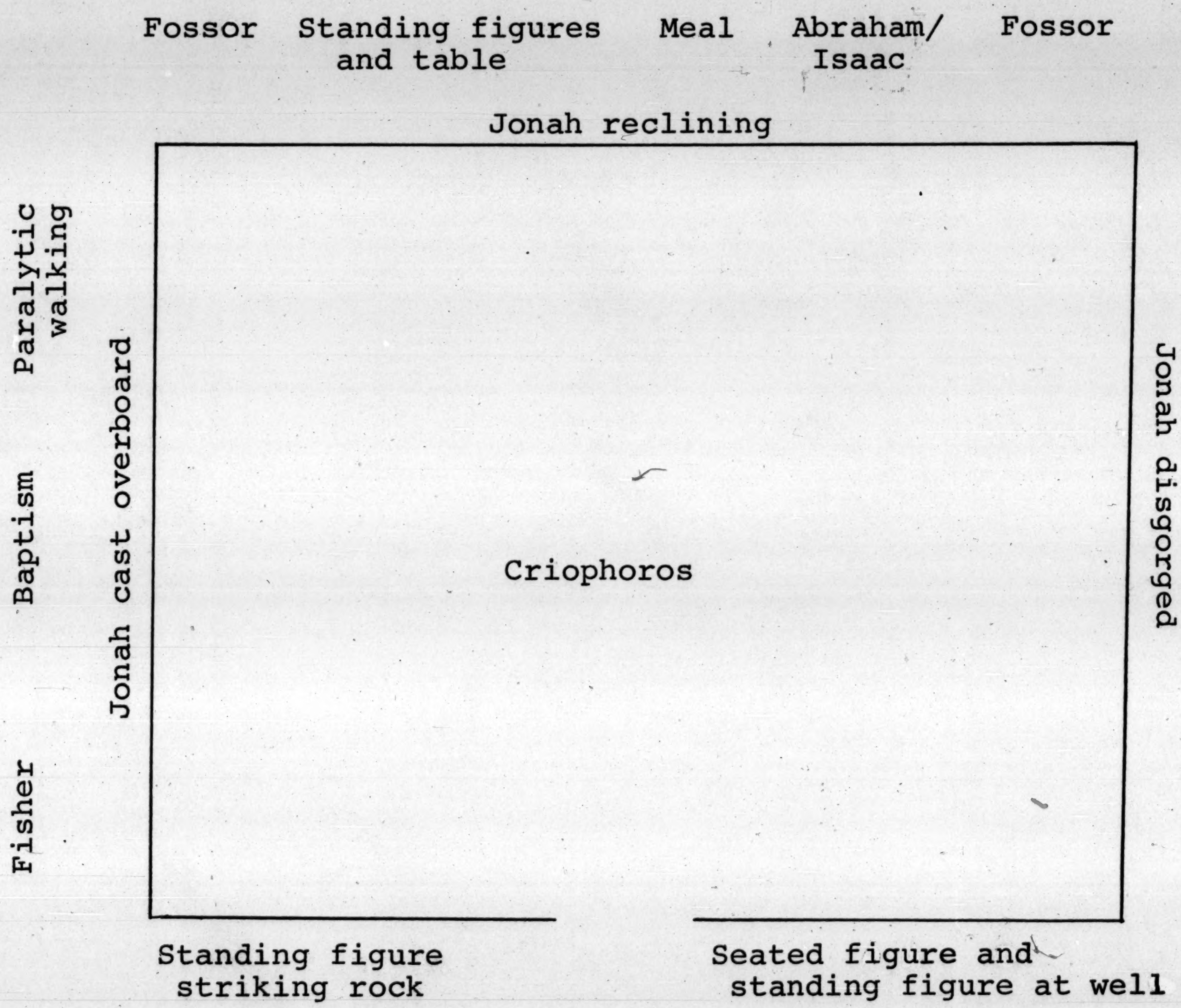
North wall, upper register, Jonah reclining under the bower with the gourd plant, birds: _RS_ II, Tav. XIII/3, _WMK_, Taf. 26/3.

North wall, middle register, loculus panel, _fossors_ to the extreme left and right, three legged table flanked by two figures, one of them a female orans. Like the storm scene on the north wall of cubiculum A_2 in the Callixtus catacomb, and the paintings in the so-called 'Cubicolo della Passione' in the catacomb of Praetextatus, or the paintings on the north and east walls of the Dura baptistery, this scene has been a source of controversy since its discovery. It is generally agreed that some kind of cultic action is portrayed here, but whether it is from the cult of the living (cf. WMK, 289; L. de Bruyne, "L'imposition....", 200-01) of from the cult of the dead (T. Klauser, Die Kathedra im Totenkult, Münster, 1927, 137; F.J. Dölger, AC II, 1930, 95-97; H. von Schönebeck, "Altchristliche Grabdenkmäler und antike Grabgebräuche", ARW 34, 1937, 79) is open to question. In the center of the panel, a meal scene at a sigma, seven participants, seven baskets of bread, two platters with one fish each, and at the right end of the panel, Isaac and Abraham both as orans figures, dressed in tunica discincta, sheep, tree, and bundle of faggots to the right of them; RS II, Tav. XIII, XVI/1,2,3, XVII/2,3, WMK, Taf. 41/1,2,3; Wirth, Rom. Wändmal..., Taf. 41/b has a better reproduction than Wilpert, although Wirth's photograph is printed in reverse. It is clear from the catalogue of Abraham/Isaac scenes given by Isabel Speyart van Worden, "The Iconography of the Sacrifice of Abraham", VC XV/4, 1961, 245-246, that there is considerable pictorial variety in the painted representations of this scene while in sculpture, ibid., 243-45, there is considerable unanimity. She divides Abraham/Isaac scenes into three interpretative categories: symbols of deliverance (what I have called salvation paradigms), illustrative and historical representations (which are more commonly called narrative art), and typological monuments. The earliest known representations of the sacrifice of Abraham, of which our example here may be the earliest, function as symbols, that is as salvation paradigms. The well-known example in the Dura Synagogue, on the upper right-hand corner of the arch of the Torah shrine, is not excepted from this category, although there the Sacrifice of Abraham bears not only its primary symbolic significance but also a (secondary?) narrative, historical significance which it acquires by association with the large narrative sequence of the Synagogue paintings; cf. Final Report VIII/I, 361-63.

East wall, upper register, loculus panel, Jonah disgorged by ketos; RS II, Tav. XVI/9, WMK, Taf. 26/2.

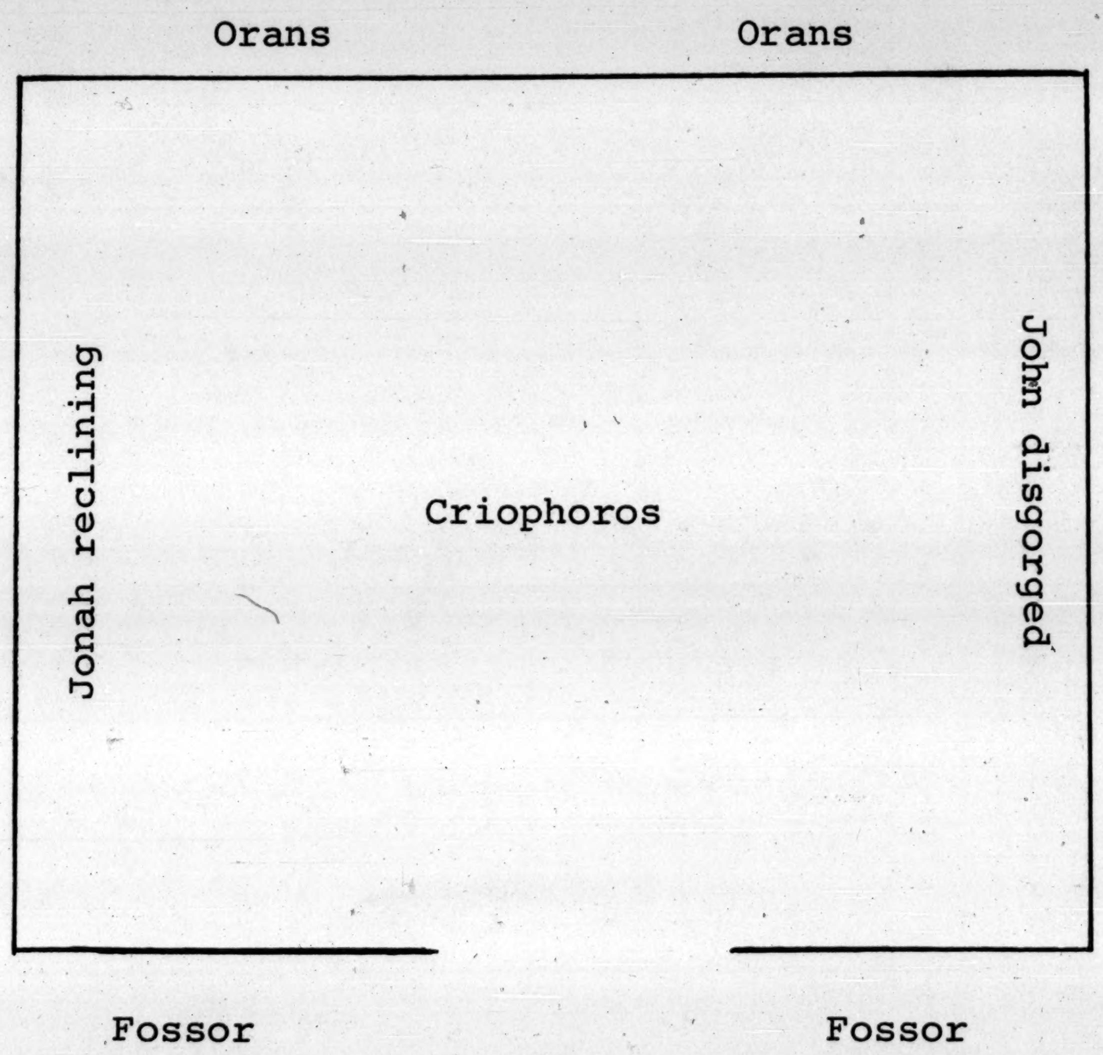
Paintings in the chapels of the Sacraments, con't.

Cubiculum A/3


Fossor
Standing figures and table
Meal
Abraham/ Isaac
Fossor
Jonah reclining
Paralytic walking
Baptism
Fisher
Jonah cast overboard
Criophoros
Jonah disgorged
Standing figure striking rock
Seated figure and standing figure at well

Paintings in the chapels of the Sacraments, con't.

Cubiculum A/4


Orans
Orans
Jonah reclining
Criophoros
John disgorged
Fossor
Fossor

South east wall panel, figure drawing from a well with a bucket in hand; above to the left, seated figure reads from a scroll; *RS* II, Tav. XVII/1, *WMK*. Taf. 29/2, *WMS*, 1-14.

South west wall panel, Moses striking rock; *RS* II, XVI$_4$.

West wall, upper register, loculus panel, boat with seated helmsman at the left and standing orans on the bow to the right, mast with sails drawn in the center and Jonah cast overboard, *ketos* to the right; *RS* II, Tav. XIII/3, XVI/8.

West wall, middle register, loculus panel, seated fisherman, baptism as *Impositio Manus*, paralytic walking, carrying his pallet; *RS* II, Tav. XIII/3, XVI/5,6, *WMK*, Taf. 27/3.

3. (Cubiculum A_4)

Ceiling. In the central medallion, shepherd-criophoros flanked by trees; in the second and third zones, garlands and flowers; in the outside zone opposite each other in semi-circles, Jonah disgorged and Jonah reclining under the bower with the gourd tree, birds, flowers; *RS* II, Tav. XIII/2, R. Garrucci, *op.cit.*, II, Tav. 8/1.

North wall, middle register, loculus panel, orans figures, one to the left and one to the right; *RS* II, Tav. XIII/2, *WMK*, Fig. 14.

Southeast and southwest wall panels, middle registers, *fossors*; *RS* II, Tav. XVIII/3,4, *WMK*, Taf. 48/1.

4. (Cubiculum A_5)

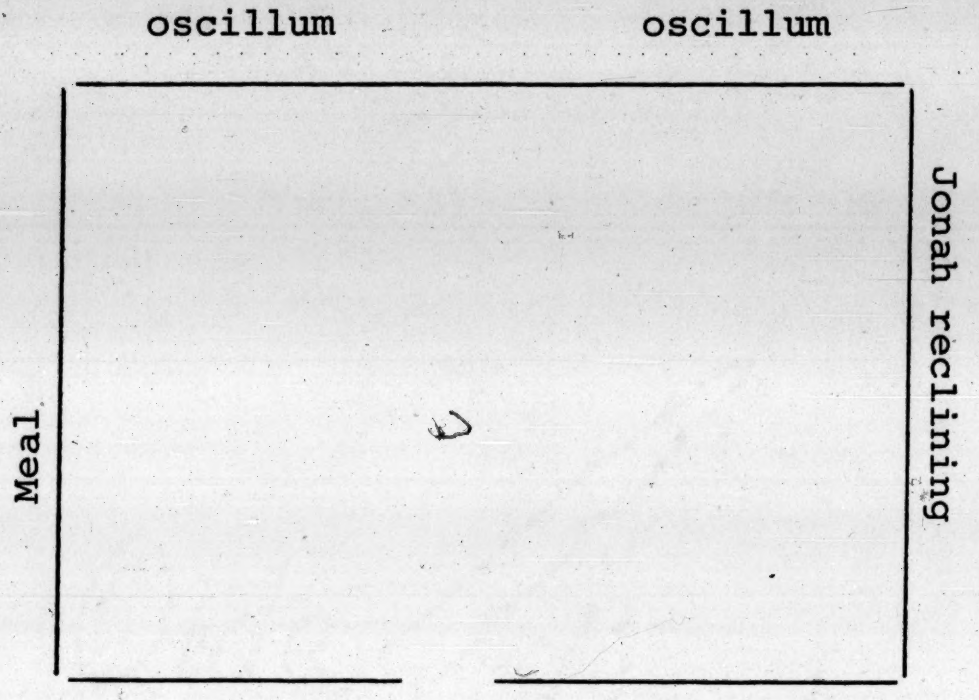
Ceiling, destroyed.

West wall, middle register, loculus panel, meal scene at a *sigma* with seven participants, seven baskets of bread, two fish (and two other unidentifiable objects on the platter); figure to the far right appears to hold a large cup in his right hand; left and right are birds and flowers; *RS* II, Tav. XII, XVIII/5, *WMK*, Taf. 41/4.

North wall, middle register, loculus panel, *oscilla*; *RS* II, Tav. XII, XVIII/6, *WMK*, Taf. 8/3.

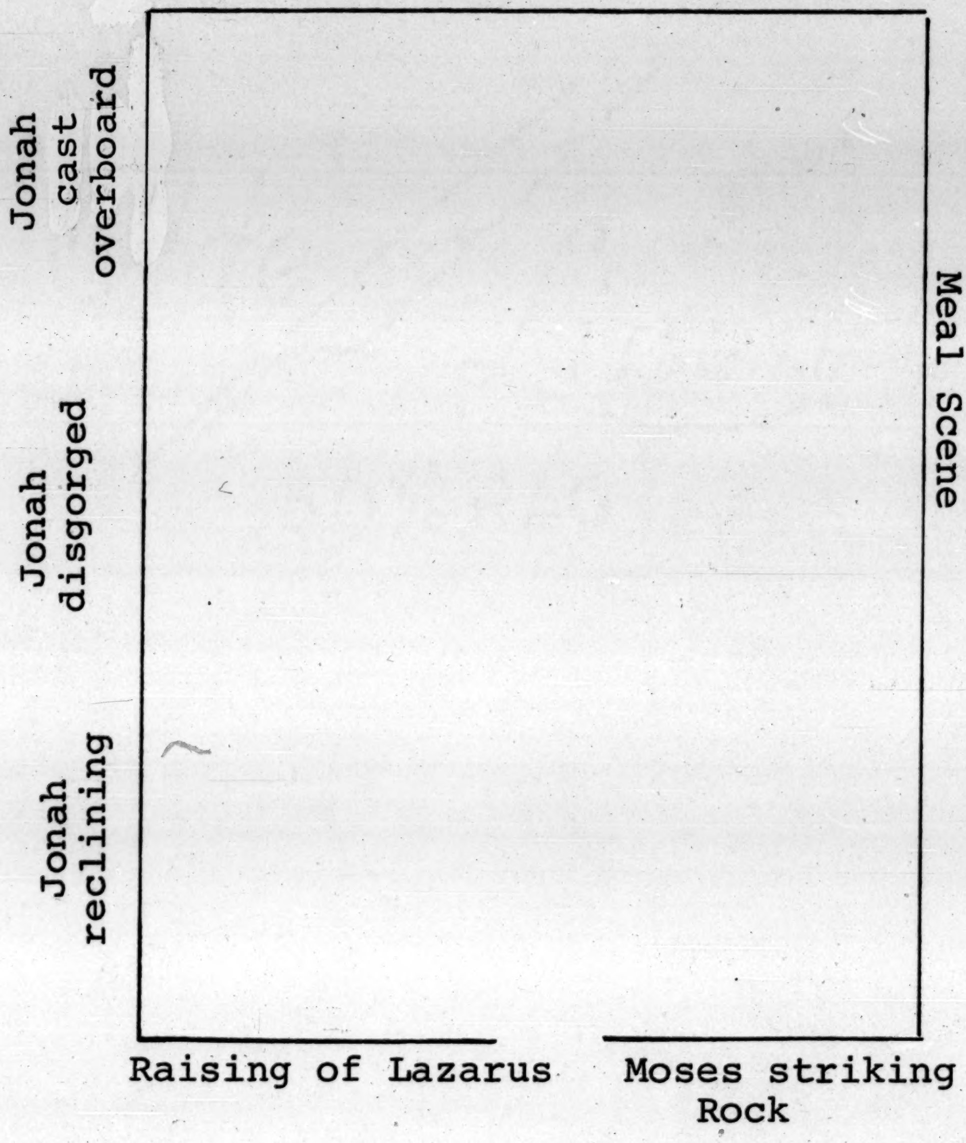
East wall, middle register, loculus panel, Jonah reclining under the bower with the gourd plant, birds, flowers; *RS* II, Tav. XII, *WMK*, Taf. 47/1.

Cubiculum A_5



5. (Cubiculum A_6)
Ceiling, destroyed.
West wall, middle register, loculus panel, from right to left, ship with sails drawn, two helmsmen to the right, Jonah cast overboard to the left, ketos to the left; in the center left, Jonah disgorged, in far left corner, Jonah reclining under the bower with the gourd plant; RS II, Tav. XIII/1, WMK, Taf. 47/2.
East wall, middle register, loculus panel, meal scene at a sigma with seven participants (nos. five and seven from the left gesticulating), ten baskets of bread, two platters with one fish each (one to the left is destroyed): RS II, Tav. XIII/1, WMK, Taf. 15/2.
Southeast wall panel, Moses striking the rock; RS II, Tav. XIV/1, WMK, Taf. 46/1.
Southwest wall panel, Lazarus (naked?) standing before the aedicula of a temple-like edifice, to the right, Jesus, gesticulating with virgula in the left hand; RS II, XIV/1, WMK, Taf. 46/2.

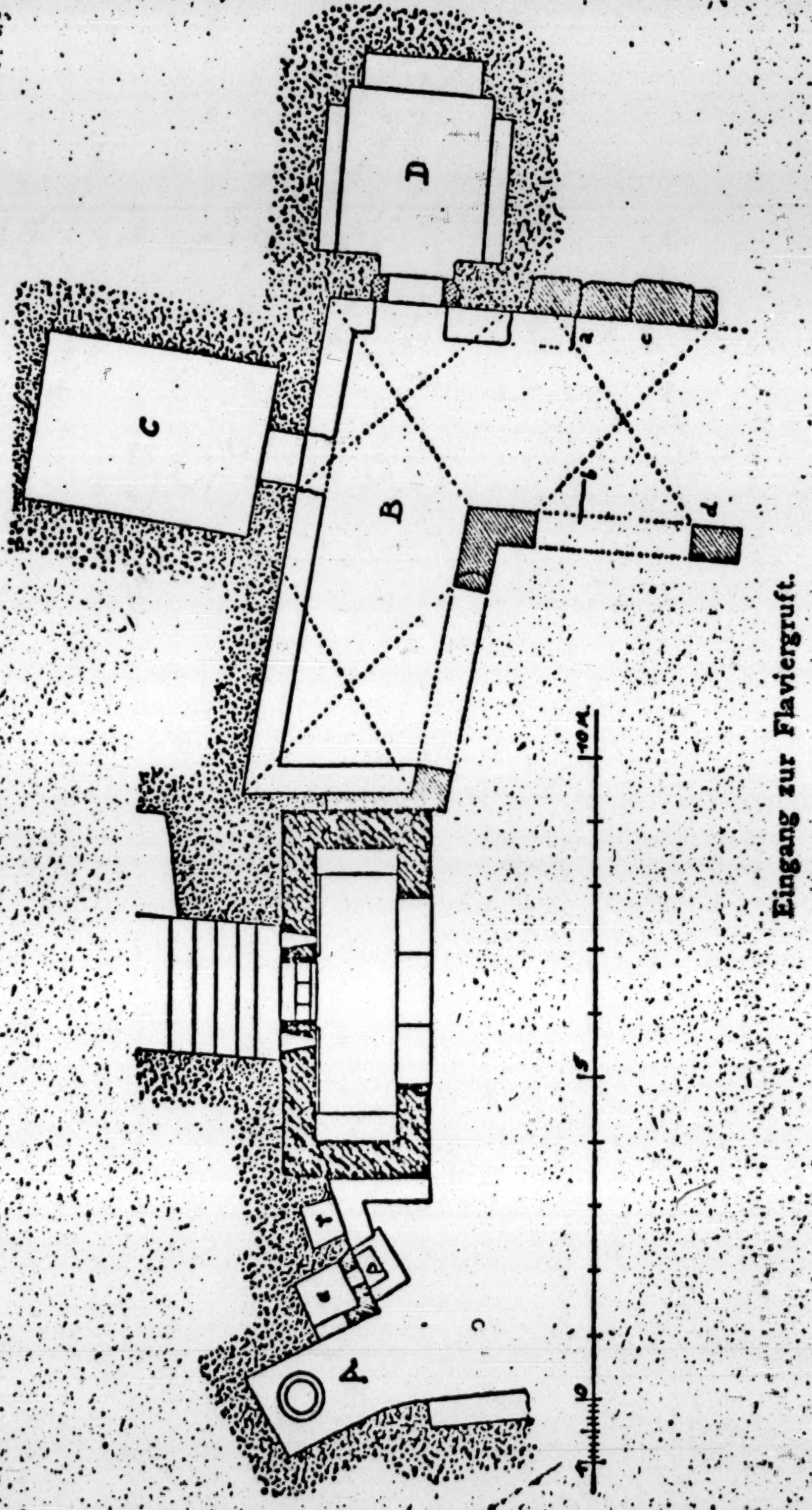
Cubiculum A_6


Jonah cast overboard
Jonah disgorged
Jonah reclining
Meal Scene
Raising of Lazarus
Moses striking Rock

The other paintings in Callixtus which have sometimes been assigned to the third century include: The painting on the arcosolium grave in corridor A between Chapels A/2 and A/3 (Plan, 10); cf. RS II, Tav. 22. The cubiculum of Miltiades contains on the ceiling medallion a representation of the raising of Lazarus with decorative birds along the border; cf. RS II, Tav. 23,24/1; WMK. Taf. 128/1 (Plan, 11). Opposite the cubiculum of Miltaides within lunettes are pictured two half reclining figures, the one nede to the waist, holds a bowl of fruit in his right hand, while the female figure dressed in a tunic holds a bowl of flowers in her left hand and holds her right hand to her head, surrounded with birds, flowers, and garlands; cf. RS II, Tav. 25/1-4, 26; WMK Taf. 85/1, 128/2 (Plan, 11a). Cf. also RS II, Tav. 24/2-4 (Plan, 13).

Catacomb of Domitilla, via delle sette chiese, 282 (called alternately, and perhaps more correctly, the catacomb of Saints Nereus and Achilleus). The Flavia Domitilla who was banished to Pandeteria by Domitian as related in Cassius Dio's Roman History, 67/14, was almost certainly not a Christian; cf. T. Barnes, "Legislation against Christians," JRS 18, 1968, 35,36; also Styger, RK, 63-80, RM, 163-170 (the basilica of Nereus, Achilleus, and the apocryphal daughter of St. Peter, Petronilla); Schneider, art.cit., 182-84. The oldest nucleii within the Domitilla complex are the so-called area of the Aurelians, Styger, RK, 79-94; Schneider, art.cit., 186 the area at the foot of the long staircase known as the "Scale di Tor Marancia," and the so-called Hypogaeum of the Flavians. There is no evidence of third century figured Christian remains in the area of the Aurelians. There is a decorated funerary cubiculum under the light well of the staircase at Tor Marancia, however the date of the cubiculum and its paintings has never been fixed. De Rossi judged that this was the oldest cubiculum in the Domitilla complex: "Il cubicula... ha parecchi caratteri di tanta antichità, che sembra anteriore ad ogni sistema d'escavazione cemeteriale e d'arte decorativa cristiana...," RS I, 187. Wirth, op.cit., 176,177, argued in one place that the ceiling must be mid-third century and everything else of later date; in an earlier work, "Römische Wandmalerei vom Untergang Pompejis bis Hadrian", RömMitt 44, 1929, 107, Wirth suggested that the arcosolium panel, WMK Taf. 6/2, 10, could date from the third century. Styger, RK, 95ff. argued a fourth century date for the entire cubiculum and its paintings and Schneider, art.cit., 185, accepted the evidence adduced by Styger; cf. WMK, Taf. 9, 11/3, 12; Wirth, op.cit., Abb.90, art.cit., Taf.18. Also in the region of the Tor Marancia are a loculus panel with bucolic iconography, WMK, Taf. 121, 122/2, the Ampliatus cubiculum, WMK, Taf. 30, 31/1, and the Orpheus cubiculum, so-named because its ceiling medallion which was destroyed in the eighteenth century protrayed Orpheus; cf. Garrucci, op.cit. II, Tav. 25; WMK, Taf.55. The date of all these paintings is uncertain; the lost Orpheus ceiling may have dated from the third century. The third and last of the early nucleii in the Domitilla complex, the so-called Hypogaeum Flaviorum, was discovered by the de Rossi brothers in 1860 and was identified by Giovanni Battista de Rossi as a funerary place connected with the Flavian *gens*. De Rossi's interesting account of the excavation and historical reconstruction of this place can be read in *BullAC* 1865, 17-24, 33-46, 89-99; 1874, 1-35, 68-75, 122-125; 1875, 1-77; 1879, 5-20; 1880, 69, 169-171; 1881, 57-74. In his "Der Eingang zum Hypogaeum Flaviorum," *RömMitt* 43, 1928, 1-12, Abb. 1a, 4b, A.M. Schneider showed that the fragmentary marble *titulus*, which de Rossi believed had once sat in place over the doorway to the major *dromos*, had never been in that place; cf. O. Marucchi, *Monumenti del Cimitero di Domitilla sulla via Ardeatina descritti* ..., (*Roma Sotterranea Cristiana*, N.S. I/1), Roma, 1909, Tav. VI. One enters the Hypogaeum Flaviorum from the north, through a narrow vestibule (1.22 meters) and gate. Schneider dated this complex to the middle or late second century. On the left and right of the entrance are adjoining rooms, very likely used for funerary *refrigeria*. Cubiculum A to the left contains a well and has on its ceiling traces of decorative painting. A small chamber (α) adjoins A and was used for reserving well water; a lead cock runs from this reservoir into an adjacent trough (β) also used for gathering water. A bench is constructed around the wall immediately adjacent to the trough. On the right side of the entrance is a large assembly room (B) with three groined vaults that show the traces of decorative fruit and garland motifs. Benches flank the walls of the assembly room and two cubicula lead off of it, one (C) to the south, and another (D) to the west. The latter predates the construction of the main assembly room and contains the well-known pagan iconography, Amor and Psyche in a bucolic landscape; cf. Marucchi, *op.cit.*, Tav. 8-12. From the entrance gate tapering off and descending to the southwest runs the main *dromos*, or gallery, of the complex; cf. Marucchi, *op.cit.*, Tav. 20-23. Four lateral mausolea open off of the main *dromos*, two to the west and two to the east. If these mausolea were used for Christian purposes before the middle of the third century, either for inhumation burials or to house sarcophagi, then they have an important Christian parallel in the Gallic funerary chamber which housed the sarcophagus of La Gayolle; cf. M. Chaillan, "Les Fouilles de La Gayolle," *BAC* 1913/3, 308ff. Most of the loculus and arcosolium graves which appear in the walls of the mausolea and in the walls of the *dromos* appear to have been later Constantinian

ROEMISCHE MITTEILUNGEN 43, 1928 TAFEL 1


A
B
C
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Eingang zur Flaviergruft
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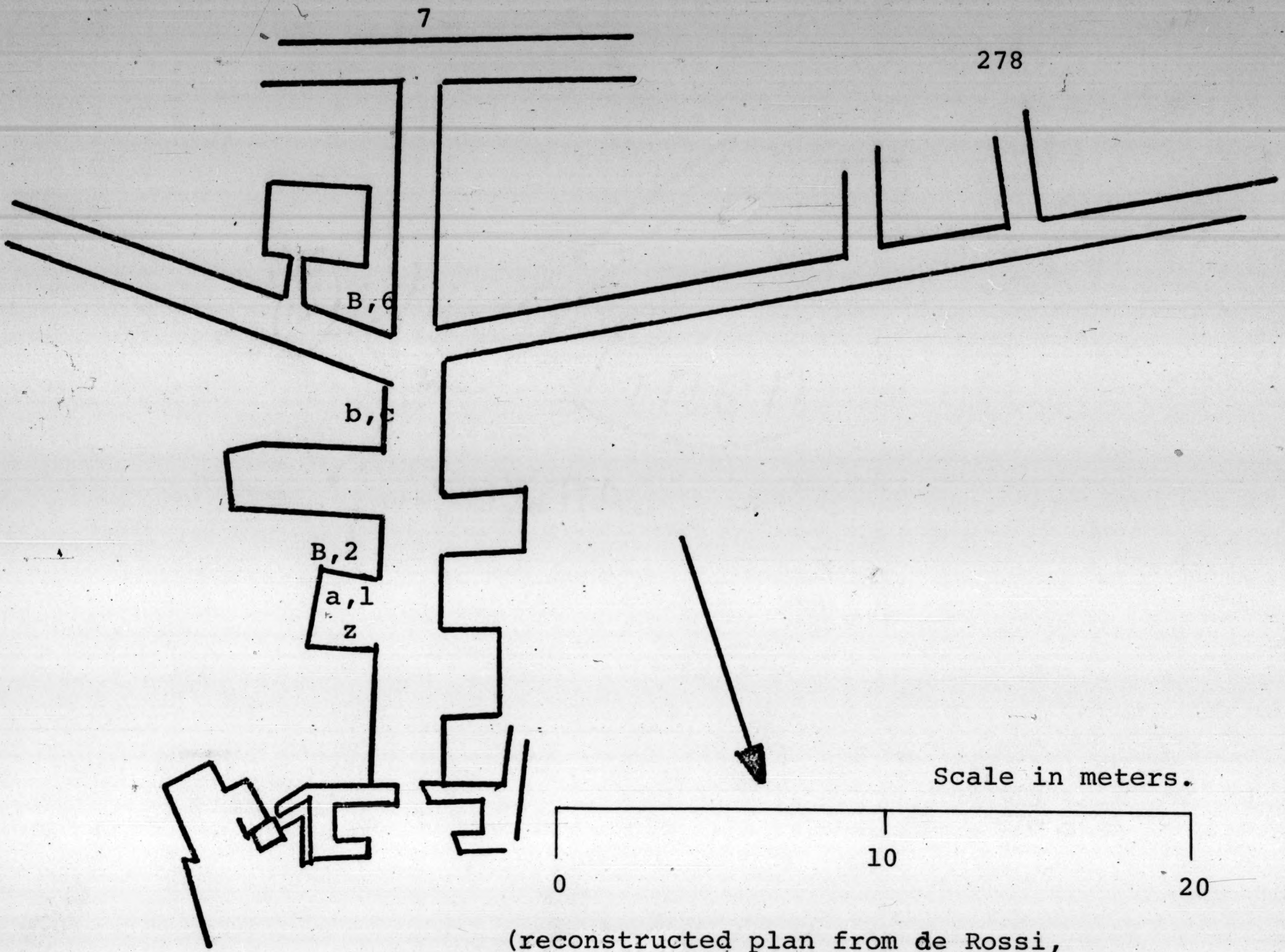
From A.M. Schneider, "Der Eingang zum Hypogaeum Flaviorum", Taf.1.

additions which came about as the result of the connection of the Hypogaeum Flaviorum with other nucleii within the overall subterranean complex. De Rossi noted the connection of the rooms left and right of the entrance with funerary refrigeria; cf. BACrist, 1865, 97ff. Meals could have been celebrated in the individual mausolea as well; cf. H. von Schönebeck, art.cit. The ceiling of the dromos together with its walls and much of the interior surfaces of the individual mausolea are covered with decorative paintings, most of which could have been executed during the pagan occupation of this site. There is no agreement about the date of these decorative frescoes; cf. Marucchi, op.cit., Tav. 13-16; Wirth, op.cit., 170(ca. 230 A.D.). De Rossi's account, BACrist 3/6, 1865(June), 41-46 of the walls and ceilings which he saw for the first time more than a century ago and which today have largely faded to obscurity reads as follows:



(reconstructed plan from de Rossi,
BullAC III/6, 1865 (June), 46)

7. "...cena del pane e del pesce...Due persone...sedute sopra un letto hanno dinanzi a se il tripode, sul quale e imbandito un pesce attorniato da tre pani. Di contro sta in piedi un uomo...", cf. Marucchi *op.cit.*, Tav. 24; *WMK*, Taf. 7/4; E. Weigand, BZ 32, 1932, 66 (late second century, pagan).

B,6. "Noe nell'arca e la colomba che a lui vola...", Marucchi, *op.cit.*, Tav. 18; Garrucci, *op.cit.* II, Tav. 19/3; *WMK* I, 344/n.3, if this is Noah, which it surely is, then it is the oldest surviving example of this iconography in the Roman catacombs; its early third century date makes it approximately contemporary with the Noah iconography on the Apameia coins.

b,c. "...rimane, ma assai scolorita e guasta, una pecora pascente a lato ad un albero...", cf. *RS* I, Tav. 17/3.

B,2. "Daniele fra i leoni", Marucchi, *op.cit.*, 17, 19/2; *WMK*, Taf. 5/1.

a,1. "...le chiare tracce del pescatore, che con l'amo pendente dalla lunga canna prende il pesciolino...",

z. "...di fronte al pescatore rimangono le vestigia d'una capra, che stava ai piedi di una figura umana...quella figura era senza fallo il pastore."

From de Rossi's descriptions it is clear that the only certain evidence of a Christian (or Jewish) occupation of this nucleus before the fourth century is the Daniel and Noah iconography. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that none of the iconographic themes which were preserved in the Hypogaeum Flaviorum at the time of its excavation would have been offensive to early Christians, especially if they were Gentile converts (unless we assume that early Christians were rigorists). The images in question could all be legitimately classified as proto-Christian (Appendix II). Unfortunately de Rossi never published the sarcophagus fragments which he found "tra le rovine nel grande ambulacro", BACrist, 1865, 37. In RS I, 343, he compared these fragments with others found in the Lucina area, i.e., RS I, Tav. 30,32, but he did not illustrate those found presumably in the dromos of the Hypogaeum Flaviorum. Styger, RK, 75,76 refers to lapidary fragments found in Domitilla: "Meeresungetüme, Hippokampe usw. offenbaren ihre Zugehörigkeit zum poseidonischen Manenkult..." Von Schönebeck, art.cit., 64 also alludes to sarcophagus fragments from Domitilla, but I am unable to find any publication of these monuments. In the absence of any further evidence from Domitilla, it should be said that the oldest surviving examples of distinctly Christian iconography are meagre in extent. On the other hand it is worth noting that, if there were a Christian occupation of this site in the early third century, (which is at least possible if not probable) then its Christian occupants were distinctly philiconic.

Catacomb of Praetextatus, via Appia Pignatelli, 1.

The quality of the work which has been done on Praetextatus is very uneven; our knowledge of this complex has not been added to significantly since de Rossi's investigations nearly a century ago, cf. Styger, RK, 146/1 (there the older literature). The chronological sequence of the separate nucleii within the Praetextatus complex is only relative and is largely inferred from the observations on the structural history of the site. Two nucleii have been dated to the third century. The first of these, the so-called Spelunca Magna, preserves no paintings which can be dated before the fourth century; cf. Styger, RK, 154-64; d'Ossat, op.cit., 167-175. On the use of the graves of Agapitus and Felicissimus, martyrs decapitated in A.D. 258, as criteria for dating the Spelunca Magna, cf. R. Kanzler, "Restitutione Architettonica della Cripta dei SS. Felicissimo ed Agapito nel Cimitero di Praetestato", NuovBull, 1895, 172ff. The second nucleus, in the region of the "Scala maggiore", contains the so-called "Cubiculo della passione" (or "Kammer der Dornenkronung"), which belongs to the second phase of the structural history of the site and which was discovered in 1850. The name of the cubiculum is taken from the iconography of its frescoes; however the uncertainty of their identity is refected in the fact that this cubiculum is known in the study of early Christian archaeology by at least three other names: "Cubiculum or Urania and Herodes", "Kammer der Johannestaufe", and "Chamber of the Shepherd (Hermas, Sim. VIII)"; cf. Schneider, "Die ältesten Denkmäler...", 187. The walls to the left and the right of the entrance to the cubiculum contain four mensa graves each, and a ninth grave is situated opposite the entrance in the back wall; the ceiling of the chamber opens upward into a small light well. There survive four scenes depicted on the walls of this chamber:

1. Left wall, middle register, a standing female figure dressed in tunica manicata and holding a bowl with both hands looks to the right to a gesticulating male figure, dressed in tunica and (red or purple) chlamys; between them, below, apparently on the ground, is a circular object, possibly the opening of a cistern or well; WMK, Taf. 19; op.cit. II, Tav. 38/3; L. Perret, Catacombes de Rome I, Paris, 1852-1855, pl. 81.
2. Left wall, middle register, directly above the forementioned panel, the bottom third of another scene is preserved. The base of a building may have been represented on the left, thought by some to be the steps of the mausoleum from which Lazarus was raised; WMK, Taf. 45/1. To the right are seen the fragments of two standing figures, the one with its garment hanging to the knees, the other with its garment hanging almost to the ankles, sometimes identified, respectively, as Jesus and Lazarus' sister; WMK, Taf. 19.
3. Left wall, middle register, located to the left of 1 and 2, halfway between them, are seen two standing male figures dressed in tunica or chlamys or paenula and, to the right of them, stands an isolated figure dressed in a pallium and wearing an unidentified object on its head, sometimes called a crown of thorns; further to the right is the fragment of a tree branch with a bird perched upon it, inclining toward the isolated standing figure; WMK, 226-229, Taf. 18.

4. Right wall, lower middle register, are seen three standing figures dressed in *pallia*; the top half of the third figure to the right is destroyed. A kneeling figure in red, almost in a supine position, can be seen in back of the middle figure (this was painted at the same time with the rest of the scene and is not a figure from an earlier composition). The kneeling figure touches with its hand the garment of the third figure to the right; *WMK*, Taf. 20.

The ceiling of this cubiculum shows the shepherd-criophoros figure at the vault enclosed by three concentric rings in a central medallion; in the second zone are four quasi-trapezoidal frames each enclosing a hanging shell and standing ducks, painted within semicircles at the long base of each trapezoid. Between the trapezoidal frame elements in the outside zones flying pigeons can be seen in two corners; the other corners are destroyed; *WMK*, 434, Taf. 17.

Catacomb of Priscilla, via Salaria Nuova, 430.

The catacomb of Priscilla, northeast of the city on the via Salaria, contains at least four nucleii which were dug out for inhumation burials probably prior to the third century, but none of these areas of early occupation contains paintings which date before the middle of the century. Again, there is no absolute certainty in this matter, but the probabilities weigh in favor of a later date, especially so in the case of the celebrated "Cappella Greca", which leads off of a main assembly room, probably of mid-third century date; cf. A.M. Schneider, "Die ältesten Denkmäler...", 190ff.; J. Kollwitz, *art. cit*., F. Wirth, *RW*, 213-215. This funerary chamber gained its name from two Greek inscriptions cut into the mortar which lines the conch of its apse; cf. V. Davin, *Les Antiquités Chrétiennes rapportées à La Cappella Greca*, Paris, 1892, pl. X/1. The iconography of the frescoes in the Cappella Greca includes the following subjects: paralytic, Dionysiac decorative motifs, the magi approaching Mary, seated and holding the infant Jesus, Daniel (uncertain), three youths in the fire, Moses or Peter striking the rock, scenes from the story of Susanna, Abraham's sacrifice, the raising of Lazarus, and a famous meal scene, identified by Wilpert as a primitive eucharist at the point within the *synaxis* of the breaking of the bread; cf. J. Wilpert, Fractio Panis. *Die Darstellung des Eucharistischen Opfers in der "Cappella Greca*", Freiburg, 1895 (includes plan, by R. Kanzler, and plates). Also important is J. Liell, Die Darstellung der allerseligsten Junfrau und Gottesgebärerin Maria auf den Kunstdenkmälern der Katakomben, Freiburg, 1887. The attempt to link up one of the oldest nucleii within the Priscilla complex with M. Acilius Glabrio, consul in A.D. 91, has proved to be unsupportable; cf. Styger, RK, 101, 107ff.; Schneider, "Die ältesten Denkmäler...", 189. The "Arenarium", or sandpit, contains Christian paintings of uncertain date, possibly third century; cf. Styger, RK, 117, Taf. 24; WMK, Taf. 21/1,2, 22 and p. 171, fig. 12. Styger's interpretation of the "Cappella Greca", together with the main aula which it adjoins and the kitchen, chamber M, as spaces which originally acoommodated the funerary meal, deserves serious consideration; cf. Styger, RK. 136-145.

The only other wall paintings which we can identify as Christian and which date to the early third century are those found in the baptismal room of the "domus ecclesiae" at Dura Europos. There are other paintings in Rome which have been called Christian from time to time and dated to the early third century (or late second century). The most important of these are the so-called tomb of the Aurelii in the viale Manzoni and the tomb of the Hermete (Clodius Hermes) under the church of San Sebastiano; both monuments are discussed in Appendix III. Other Roman funerary paintings, of uncertain date and identification, are discussed in C. Cecchelli, Monumenti Cristiano-Eretici di Roma, Rome, 1944. The richly decorated hypogaeum near the intersection of the via Latina with the via Dino Compagni dates between A.D. 300 and 410; cf. A. Ferrua, Le pitture della nuova catacomba di via Latina, Città del Vaticano, 1960. Other paintings of non-Roman provenance may qualify for inclusion within the present listing. The most important of these are paintings preserved within the oldest nucleii of the Catacomb of San Gennaro in Naples and the recently discovered fragments in a funerary chamber of the necropolis underneath the church of St. Felix in Cimitile, near Nola in the Roman Campagna. Unfortunately, the last serious attempt to establish the chronology of early Christian Naples was undertaken by a scholar who was not trained in archaeological method and who relied somewhat uncritically on analogies drawn from the older Roman (pre-Styger) chronology of early Christian Rome: H. Achelis, Die Katakomben von Neapel, Leipzig, 1936, and by the same author, *Die Bedeutung der Katakomben von Neapel für die christliche Kunstgeschichte* , Leipzig, 1932. Achelis dated the ceiling of the vestibule in Catacomb I at San Gennaro to the second or possibly the first centuries. He derived the scene on the ceiling of the vestibule in Catacomb II, also at San Gennaro, from *Visio* III of the *Shepherd of Hermas* and dated this ceiling to the third century. A critical review of Achelis' work on the catacombs of Naples was provided by E. Weigand, *BZ*, 1937, 460-474. Achelis' chronology is unacceptable; however there has been no effort to replace it in more recent years. Pre-Constantinian burials are reported in the Catacomb of Sta. Lucina in Syracuse, but the existence of contemporary images is not mentioned; cf. J. Führer and V. Schultze, *Die altchristlichen Grabstätten Siziliens*, Berlin, 1907, 36-52; M.I. Finley, *Ancient Sicily*, N.Y., 1968, 209-210 (more recent bibliography); S.L. Agnello, "Paganesimo e Cristianesimo nelle Catacombe di Sta. Lucina a Siracusa", *Atti V.CIAC*, 235-243; and O. Garaua, *Le Catacombe Siciliane e i loro Martiri*, Palermo, 1961 (there the older literature). The frescoes reported at Cimitile include a representation of Adam and Eve and of Jonah being spewed forth from the mouth of the whale; cf. G. Chierici, "Cimitile", *RivAC* 33, 1957, 105, fig. 3 and *Soprintendenza alle gallerie e alle opere d'arte della Campania*, nos. 2069, 4226 (excavation photographs); H. Belting, *Studien Zur Beneventanischen Malerei*, Wiesbaden, 1968, 92ff. (there the complete bibliography). There is no consensus concerning the date of these frescoes; if it can be proved archaeologically that they are contemporaneous with the chamber in which they are preserved, a room which is thought to date from the late second century, then the evidence from Cimitile will require a revision of the now traditional *terminus a quo* established for early Christian painting. I am indebted to Professor Belting for bringing these frescoes to my attention.

Early Christian catacombs with pictorial iconography were reported from Alexandria in the nineteenth century; excavations were conducted in 1858 and later in the century. Qom Shugafa, just to the west of Pompey's column, appears to be no longer accessible; cf. reports in *BACrist* Serie I, Anno III/10, 1865, 73-77 and Serie I, Anno IV/5, 1866, 72; E. Josi, "Alessandria.8.Archaeologia", *EC* I, 1948, 773-777; H.I. Bell,"Alexandria", *JEA* 13, 1927, 30ff.

The paintings in the baptismal room of the house church at Dura Europos.

In the Final Report VIII/II, 34-39, Kraeling argued that the house church was not adapted to Christian purposes until the forties of the third century, probably in the mid-forties. The city, and together with it the Christian building, was destroyed by an invasion from the west in A.D. 256. Thus we have a fairly precise span of ten to fifteen years within which the Christian paintings could have been executed. Their iconography includes the following subjects:

1. the paralytic reclining and carrying his pallet with Jesus in the background; Final Report VIII/II, plates XVIII, XXIII-XXXV.
2. Jesus and Peter walking on the water, boat with disciples in the background; Final Report VII/III, plates XVIII, XXV, XXXIII, XXXVI, XXXVII, XXXVIII/2.
3. Garden Scene (destroyed); Final Report VII/III, plate XXXIX.
4. Woman drawing from a cistern or well; Final Report VIII/II, plates XXI, XXIX/1, XXXIII/1, XL.
5. David standing next to the slain Goliath; Final Report VIII/II, plates XXII, XXIX/2, XXXIII/1, XLI. In his Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period II, N.Y., 1953, 105ff., E. Goodenough discussed a lamp presently in the Yale University Art Gallery which contains David and Goliath iconography. The lamp was a poor man's menorah, according to Goodenough, as the seven holes in it clearly indicate, and it should be dated from the first century A.D. Goodenough's identification of the lamp as Jewish seems substantiated; unfortunately he did not adduce any parallel evidence in dating it, and hence its date remains conjectural. If it could be clearly assigned to the first century then this would constitute another piece of evidence weighing in favor of the theory that Christians inherited their pictorial iconography from Jews.
6. On the east wall are the fragments of five standing figures, perhaps females and perhaps part of a continuous sequence which was intended to be seen as moving onto the adjacent north wall where we see a door and, beyond to the north west, three female figures bearing torches and bowls, moving toward an object which may be a sarcophagus; Final Report VII/III, plates XIX,XX,XXIV,XXVI-XXVIII,XXXIII, XLII-XLVI.
7. Shepherd-criophoros carrying an oversized ram with a flock of rams; Final Report VII/III,plates XVII,XXIII, XXX-XXXII.

8. Adam and Eve; Final Report VIII/II, plates XXXI, XXXII/1,3. The most important iconographic addition to the repertory of third century Christian painting known from western sources is the (conjectured) resurrection sequence on the north and east walls of the baptistery; cf. Jeanne Villette, "Que représente la grande fresque de la maison chrétienne de Doura?", RB, LX, 1953, 398-413. With considerable hesitation Kraeling (Final Report VIII/II, 71ff.) identified a possible literary prototype of this scene in Tatian's Diatessaron. E. Kitzinger has suggested in informal conversation that the prototype could be liturgical rather than literary. This possibility has never been explored in detail. J.B. Segal, Edessa, the Blessed City, Oxford, 1970,163 writes: "The Edessans were always willing to find an occasion for celebrations at the declaration of peace, on remission of taxes, or at a pagan spring festival. They went in procession wearing festive white garments carrying torches and censers."

There are other sources which require only brief mention in this section on painting. Mosaics are related to painting, but no Christian mosaics survive from the first half of the third century; the oldest surviving Christian mosaic is preserved on the vault and on the north and lateral walls of Tomb M, of the Julii, in the pagan necropolis under St. Peter's in Vatican City. The date of this mosaic is disputed; however a date before the middle of the third century seems unlikely; cf. B.M. Apollonj-Ghetti, A. Ferrua, E. Josi, E. Kirschbaum, Esplorazione sotto la confessione di San Pietro in Vaticano..., Città del Vaticano, 1951, vol. I, 38-42/Tav. B, C, vol.II, Tav. 10-12; O. Perler, Die Mosaiken der Juliergruft im Vatikan, Freiburg, 1953; T. Klauser, Die römische Petrustradition im Lichte der neuen Ausgrabungen unter der Petruskirche, Köln, 1956, 38ff.; J.M.C. Toynbee and J.B. Ward-Perkins, The Shrine of St. Peter, London, 1956, 72-74, 116-117. Christian written sources with accompanying pictorial illustrations do not survive from the period which concerns us here. Note should be made however of the fact that occasional Christian papyri of the pre-Constantinian period preserve monogrammatic abbreviations, especially of the nomina sacra, and that these abbreviations contributed to the development of Christian symbolism, in particular Christological symbolism.

The staurogramm ⳨ and the Christogramm ☧ appear on second and third century papyri, although they cannot be properly classified as images or pictorial iconography; cf. E. Dinkler, "Älteste christliche Denkmäler", *Signum Crucis*, Tübingen, 1967, 177-178; F.J. Dölger, *IXΘYC I*, Münster, 1928, 351ff. And finally, related in technique to painting, are certain images which appear on early Christian glass vessels. This subject is broad and bristling with critical difficulties and deserves a more extensive treatment than is possible here. Early Christian glass falls into three structural types, gilded glass ("vetri dorati," "vetri a figure d'oro," or "fondi d'oro") cut or carved glass, and open-work glass known by the name *diatreta* (Martial 12/70/9), or *vasa diatreta*, or *Netz-diatreta* (cage cups); cf. M.L. Trowbridge, *Philological Studies in Ancient Glass*, Urbana, Illinois, 1930, 109,110; D.B. Harden, "Vetro", *EAA* VII, 1155. The best known examples of cut glass in Christian antiquity, justifiably celebrated because of their fine quality, come from the Rheinland, from the Syro-Phoenecian littoral, and from the Nile delta. Cologne was an outstanding centre of glass production in late antiquity; cf. F. Fremersdorf, *Die römischen Gläser mit Schliff, Bemalung, und Goldauflagen aus Köln*, Köln, 1967. The only category of glass objects which falls into the pre-Constantinian period is gilded glass, but these intriguing and often beautiful objects are very difficult to exploit as historical sources. Our knowledge of their historical significance remains today essentially where it was a century ago when Garrucci produced the basic study in the field: R. Garrucci, *Vetri ornati di figure in oro*, Roma, 1864, and by the same author, *Storia dell' arte cristiana* III, 104-197. Garrucci remarked briefly on the *onomasticon* of early Christian gold glass, on matters of paleography and orthography, and offered a chronological reconstruction which has been continuously disputed. The early Christian iconography which appears either etched or painted onto glass vessels is mostly familiar to us from wall painting; gilded images on glass add nothing to the repertory of New Testament iconography, but five Old Testament themes appear on glass objects and are not known from wall painting: Moses and the brazen serpent, Joseph in the cistern, the explorers of Canaan, the vision of Ezekiel, and Daniel poisoning the dragon. The shepherd-criophoros appears to have been one of the earliest themes to have appeared on Christian glass vessels; cf. C.R. Morey (ed. G. Ferrari), *The Gold Glass Collection of the Vatican Library*, Città del Vaticano, 1959, pl.III/14. Jews made gilded glass vessels which are thought to be more or less contemporary with the oldest surviving Christian examples of this technique, and the matter of the possible filiation of Christian types from Jewish models still remains conjectural; cf. I. Schüler, "A Note on Jewish Gold Glasses", *JGS* 8, 1966, 48-61 (there the older bibliography). Gilded Christian vessels survived only in funerary places; whether they were made expressly as appurtenances of the funerary cult is unknown. They may have been vessels which belonged to the deceased during his lifetime and accompanied him to the grave; the way in which Christians acquired gilded glass vessels and the occasions for such acquisitions are still unknown; cf. T. Klauser, "Becher", *RlAC* 2, 1954, 51; J. Engemann, "Bemerkungen zu spätrömischen Gläsern mit Goldfoliendekor", *JbAC* 11/12, 1968/69, 12-16. We know that Christians in Rome used glass vessels for their eucharistic liturgies under the episcopacy of Zephyrinus. Our source does not tell us however whether the *patenae vitreae* in question bore pictorial iconography: "Et fecit (Zephyrinus) constitum de ecclesia, et patenas vitreas ante sacerdotes in ecclesia, et ministros supportantes, donec episcopus missas celebraret...", L. Duschesne, *Le Liber Pontificalis*, Paris, 1888, 139. Urbanus apparently replaced Zephyrinus' glass *patenae* with silver *patenae* for reasons that are unclear: *ibid*., 143. In Pud. VII/1, Tertullian states that his opponents, the laxist Catholics, placed images of the shepherd on their *calices* which they took to be images of Christ, the good shepherd, i.e., *Pud*. VII/4; T. Klauser, *JbAC* I, 1958, 24-25, denies the literal meaning of this passage for no convincing reasons. *Pud*. is one of the latest of Tertullian's surviving Montanist treatises; cf. T.D. Barnes, *Tertullian*, Oxford, 1971, 30ff. Further on, in *Pud*.X/12ff., Tertullian returns to this theme, namely the placing of the shepherd image on cups set aside for eucharistic purposes. His purpose is to contrast the weakness of the shepherd of adulterers and drunkards, whom Tertullian equates with the *Shepherd of Hermas*, with the true shepherd who in contrast to Hermas does not teach a scandalous "paenitentia secunda". The Catholics, Tertullian repeats, paint images of the false shepherd on their *calices*, and as a final rejection of their sacramental and penitential aberrancies, Tertullian exclaims: "At ego eius Pastoris scripturam haurio, qui non potest frangi", *CC* II, 1301. Tertullian's shepherd could not be broken; conversely the shepherd of the Catholics must have been breakable. It is reasonable thus to infer that the *calices* which bore the image of the Catholic shepherd were made of a breakable material, perhaps glass or fired clay. Tertullian does not tell his reader whether the Catholics executed their eucharistic shepherd images in gold; had they done so, Tertullian, with his opposition to the Christian use of gold, would probably not have omitted this detail; cf. Apol. VI/6, Cult. I/II/V. One point remains relatively certain. From the written evidence which Tertullian provides it seems certain that Carthaginian Christians used eucharistic drinking vessels, calices, of a breakable material, perhaps glass, in the very early third century. Roman Christians were using eucharistic glass vessels, patenae, at the same time. The Carthaginians placed the image of the shepherd on their calices; the Romans may have done the same. Finally, we should note that some glass vessels of exceptional quality have sometimes been dated to the early third century, or even earlier; included are the Podgoritza bowl, the Köln/Braunsfeld bowl, the Brescia medallion, and the Ursula plate (from the Ursulagartenstrasse, Cologne). If indeed it is correct that Christians made monuments such as these ca. A.D. 200, then this piece of information would constitute an important addition to our understanding of the social history of early Christianity. However, until a critical chronology fo early Christian glass vessels has been established, the use of these monuments as historical sources will remain mostly a matter of conjecture.

SCULPTURE

G. Wilpert, I sarcofagi cristiani antichi, Città del Vaticano, 1929-1932.

H. von Schonebeck, "Die christlichen Paradeisossarkophage", RivAC 14, 1937, 289-343.

F. Gerke, Die christlichen Sarkophage der vorkonstantinischen Zeit, Berlin, 1940.

E. Weigand, "Die spätantike Sarkophagskulptur im Lichte neuerer Forschungen", BZ 41, 1941, 104-164, 406-446.

F. Deichmann (G. Bovini, H. Brandenburg), Repertorium der christlichantiken Sarkophage, Wiesbaden, 1967.

Early Christian sculpture is either free-standing or is sculpture in relief. The oldest surviving examples of the former are images of the shepherd-criophoros. They survive in marble and in bone (mostly ivory), are mostly of uncertain date and provenance, and have been called pagan by T. Klauser, *JbAC* I, 1958, 35-37, Anhang A (cf. Appendix II); *WS* I, 71-74, Tav. 52; J. Kollwitz, "Die Statue des Guten Hirten im Seminar für christliche Archäologie," *Kunstwerke aus dem Besitz der Albert-Ludwig Universität, Freiburg i.B.*, Berlin, 1957, 7-12; A. Legner, *Der Gute Hirte*, Düsseldorf, 1959, 9-18. One of marbles acquired by the Cleveland Museum of Art in September, 1965, is a free-standing representation of a shepherd-criophoros; cf. W. Wixom, "Early Christian Sculptures at Cleveland", *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 54/3, March, 1967, 67-88k; preliminary investigation of this sculpture, together with its companion pieces, has judged that it belongs to the second half of the third century. Cf. V. Elbern, "Aus Heidnischer und Christlicher Spätantike: Zwei Neuerwerbungen für die Frühchristlich-Byzantinische Sammlung", *Berliner Museen, Berichte aus den Ehemaligen Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 13, 1963, 12-22, Taf. 1-12; E.C. de la Ferté, *L'Antiquité chrétienne au Musée du Louvre*, Paris, 1958, 24,26,94. In the forthcoming catalogue of the ivories in the Dumbarton Oaks Collection (which I was permitted to read in manuscript form) K. Weitzmann will discuss free-standing images of the shepherd criophoros, executed in bone (ivory); Dumbarton Oaks possesses two examples, accession nos. 63.24 and 45.3, for which there are parallel pieces in Bonn and Zug, the Liverpool Museum and the Abegg Stiftung, Riggisberg (near Bern). The existence of these parallel pieces does not throw any light on the chronology of these monuments, because none of them has a fixed chronological *terminus*. Bone dolls have been found in the catacombs and were probably buried with Christian children; cf. K. McElderkin, "Jointed dolls in antiquity", *AJA* 24, 1930, 455-79; C.R. Morey, *Gli Oggetti di Avorio e di Osso del Museo Sacro Vaticano*, Città del Vaticano, 1936, 51ff. In addition to the above-mentioned shepherd criophoros figures the only other example of free-standing Christian sculpture which may date to the early third century is the well-known statue of Hippolytus, discovered in 1551 near the via Tiburtina, and installed by John XXIII in the Vatican Library in 1959. The heavily restored statue, which shows a seated figure dressed in *tunica talaris* (or *manicata*) sitting on a *cathedra*, can be identified as Christian on epigraphic grounds only; cf. G. Bovini, "La statua di Sant'Ippolito del Museo Lateranense", *Bolletino della Commissione Archeologica del Governatorato di Roma* 18, 1940, 109-128; P. Styger, *RM*, 185-191. The identity of the Hippolytus statue was questioned by P. Nautin in his *Hippolyte et Josipe. Contribution a l'histoire de la litterature chrétienne au IIIe siècle*, Paris, 1947, and by the same author, *Lettres et écrivains chrétiens au IIe e IIIe siècles*, Paris, 1961, 177ff.

The second category of early Christian sculpture is sculpture in relief; in effect this means for the third century sculpture which appears along the front and sides of sarcophagi, on sarcophagus covers, and on the stone slabs which sealed *loculus*, *forma*, *mensa*, and *arcosolium* burials. This too is a subject bristling with critical difficulties because the chronological bases of third century Christian sculpture in relief are so tentative (Appendix V). I list here six monuments which I take to be representative of the oldest surviving Christian sculpture. Virtually all of the problems of the dating, classification, identification, and interpretation of early Christian sculpture are embodied in these monuments. This is not a comprehensive listing, nor are the dates given anything more than approximations. Indeed there survive other monuments of Christian relief sculpture, most of them in fragmentary form, and many of them catalogued in the Deichmann (Bovini, Brandenburg), Repertorium...., which have been dated more or less contemporaneous with these monuments. It is even possible, though unlikely, that there survives an individual fragment or two which may predate one or all of monuments listed here. The primary purpose of this listing is to present a group of relief sculptures which are representative of Christian productions in the early third century; its purpose is not to attempt a comprehensive listing of all Christian relief sculpture which could conceivably qualify by chronological criteria as prior to the mid-third century. Given the purpose of this study and the critical uncertainties, such an attempt would be simply dysfunctional. The relief sculpture of the sarcophagus of Marcus Aurelius Prosenes presently installed in the Borghese Gardens is traditionally taken as the point of departure in the study of early Christian funerary sculpture. This monument belongs to the class of Asiatic sarcophagi which were normally placed in the out-of-doors, *sub divo*. The front of the sarcophagus shows a central *tabula* which contains the dedicatory inscription; along the vertical borders of the *tabula* are dolphins which function as *ansae* and give an effect similar to a *tabula ansata*. Naked, winged erotes hold the tails of the dolphins and below them, in the center, are seen crossed *cornucopia* and, to the left and right, quivers, bows, and lighted torches. Columns in low relief run vertically along the edges of the front; the one to the right bears an urne. The deceased is dressed in *tunica* and *pallium* and is shown lying on pillows along the cover of the monument. To the left and right, on the *acroteria* of the cover, winged genii are depicted asleep; the one to the right sits on rolls of mss., the one to the left leans on an inverted lighted torch. Each of the lateral ends of the sarcophagus bears an *apotropaic* gryphon; cf. G. Rodenwaldt, "Ein Typus römischer Sarkophage", *BJ* 147, 1942, 217-227; Deichmann (Bovini, Brandenburg), *op.cit.*, no. 929 (there the older literature). This iconography should be described as neutral in character; I see no evidence of Christian influence in it, whether implied or explicit. The visual formula is well-known, even a commonplace, in the pagan funerary symbolism of the early Empire; it expresses even somewhat prosaically traditional belief in the personal survival of the deceased after death; cf. F. Cumont, *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des romains*, Paris, 1942, 222ff. Ultimately the identification of the Prosenes sarcophagus as a Christian monument must depend on the phrase "receptus ad deum", which is found within the inscription on the upper edge of the right lateral end of the sarcophagus; cf. J. Wilpert, *Die Papstgräber und die Cäciliengruft in der Katacombe des hl. Kallistus*, Freiburg, 1909, Taf. V (compare with G.B. de Rossi, *ICUR* I, Romae, 1857, 9). E. Diehl, *ILCV* III, Berlin, 1970^2, 580, knows only one Christian parallel. H.U. Instinsky, "Marcus Aurelius Prosenes--Freigelassener und Christ am Kaiserhof", *Abh. Mainz, geistes-u. sozialwiss. Kl.*, Wiesbaden, 1964, 10/n.1, gives a pagan parallel. Instinsky did not question the Christian identification of this monument; but the meagre comparative evidence calls for greater scepticism; E. Dinkler, *art.cit.*, 174-175, "non liquet". The association of the Prosenes sarcophagus with Christianity is by no means proved; in my opinion it does not constitute a clear point of departure for the historical reconstruction of the oldest surviving Christian sculputre in relief. Otherwise there are six monuments which represent the oldest surviving Christian relief sculpture:

1. Paris (Louvre) Lion sarcophagus, in tub like form with "S" shaped fluting left and right; on each field of fluting is a lion bust. The central open field shows a shepherd criophoros, flanked by trees, a sheep to the lower right. All of the lion sarcophagi, of which this

may be the oldest surviving example (ca. A.C. 250, acc. to Gerke), adhere to a compositional type: the shepherd-criophoros is portrayed in the middle field, sometimes circumscribed by a *mandorla*, and is flanked in the fields left and right by lion busts, by lions devouring gazelles; less frequently the shepherd-criophoros is flanked by mourning genii. During the following century and a half there develop six compositional variations on this type, all of them iconological variants of the soteriological paradigm: personal salvation from death and destruction comes from Jesus the good shepherd; cf. J. Quasten, "Die Grabinschrift des Beratius Nikatoras--Libera eas de ore leonis", *RömMitt* 53, 1938, 69; F. Gerke, *op.cit.*, 247. It is difficult or impossible to insist upon a Christian interpretation of the Paris lion sarcophagus and its immediate parallels, the St. Saba sarcophagus, *WS*, 66/2, and the Sta. Trinità sarcophagus, *WS*, 66/1. The iconography of these monuments is proto-Christian; their original use as Christian monuments is largely a matter of probability. It would, however, be both purposeless and in method reductionistic, to adopt Klauser's position, namely that lion sarcophagi will not admit of Christian interpretation. The major issue at stake in Kaluser's critique is the iconological value of the shepherd-criophoros (Appendix II).

2. Paris (Louvre) Sarcophagus of Livia Primitiva, probably derived from the lion sarcophagus type; cf. *WS* 76/1, and F. Gerke, *op.cit.*, 247/n.1 (called mistakenly a loculus slab). The central open field shows, below center, a shepherd-criophoros moving forcefully to the left, flanked on both sides by sheep; to the right is an anchor and to the left, an oversize fish, standing on end; cf. *DAGR* 2/2, 1482, fig. 3535 (the well-known IX(Θ)UC intaglio) and J. Kollwitz, *Die Lipsanothek von Brescia*, Berlin/Leipzig, 1933, 68. To the left and right of the central field is "S" shaped fluting; above the inscription reads: LIVIA NICARUS/LIVIAE PRIMITIVAE/SORORI FECIT/ Q(VAE) V(IXIT) AN(NOS) XXIIII (MENSES) VIIII. The chronological relationship between the Paris lion sarcophagus and the sarcophagus of Livia Primitiva is unclear; a mid-third century date has been suggested in the analysis of the epigraphy and the iconography, but these are unreliable critieria. Stylistically, the relief sculpture of the Livia Primitiva sarcophagus cannot be profitably compared with any other contemporary sculpture; if anything the quality of the carving resembles more the graffiti which accompany countless early Christian inscriptions

than sculpture *per se*. Like the catacomb paintings, the relief sculpture of the Livia Primitiva sarcophagus is "signitive" in its stylistic character. Its iconography is unique and is without contemporary parallels (contra Gerke). The fish, the anchor, and the shepherd-criophoros should be considered proto-Christian symbols in this context. It has been possible to link the Livia Primitiva sarcophagus by epigraphic criteria with the sacophagus of Marcus Livius Hermes, discovered in Subiaco; cf. H. Leclercq, "Livia Primitiva", *DACL* 9/2, 1753. The inscription on the sarcophagus of Marcus Livius Hermes reads: Livia Nicarus/et Livius/Nymphotous/fili/ M. Livio Her/meti patri/sactissimo/fecerunt. This inscription is flanked by images of a bowl and a pitcher, which are thought to have been connected with the cult of of the dead; above the inscription there appears the image of an anchor. It is thought that this Livia Nicarus (with masculine cognomen) is the same Livia who appears in the Livia Primitiva inscription. The latter must have predeceased her father and hence does not appear together with her sister and brother on the dedicatory tabula of M. Livius Hermes; cr. F. J. Dölger, *IXΘUC* 5, Münster i.W 1943, 630/n3, 633. Images of the bowl and the pitcher on the sarcophaus of M. Livius Hermes do not prove that he was a pagan. (If (as is likely) they are to be related to the practice of funerary *refrigeria*, then this practice would not rule out a Christian interpretation. Christians after all ate and drank at the gravesite in accord with the ancient tradition of piety; cf. T. Klauser, *Die Cathedra im Totenkult*, Münster i.W., 1928, 133/n.134.

3. Città del Vaticano (Museo Pio Clementino formerly in the Museo Cristiano Lateranense). Grave plate of Beratius Nikatoras, discovered by the Marchese Campana, ca. 1840, in a tomb (now lost) near the tomb of the Scipios between the via Appia and the via Latina. The date of this monument is uncertain; it was found within the Aurelian wall and hence is assumed to date from the third century. It is reported that the chamber in which the slab was found contained Christian paintings on the ceiling and walls; cf. C. Cecchelli, *Monumenti Cristiano-Eretici di Roma*, Roma, 1944, 166, 167. The slab shows a shepherd-criophoros slightly below center, to the left is Jonah, dressed, being disgorged from the *ketos*, to the right is a lion, and below in the center is an anchor. Above this group of images the inscription reads: BHPATIOYC NIKATOPAC/ ΛAZAPIH KAI IOYΛIH /KAI ONHCIMH KON ,ΦIΛIOYC/

/BENE MEPENTEC/OBI (Hole) OC TA (Hole) YTA/⳨⳨. In the last line of the inscription between the third and the fourth letters and between the seventh and the eighth letters are two large holes cut into the face of the slab and designed to hold food offerings; cf. J. Quasten, *art. cit.*, 57/n.5. Below the Jonah-*ketos* and the lion are two more of these holes. F. Gerke, *op.cit.*, 253, argued that this manner of rendering the shepherd criophoros, as a realistic and robust shepherd, who holds the sheep firmly with both hands while the sheep lies solidly against his back and shoulders and who moves vigorously with his charge upon his back, argues for a third century date (note the similarity to the shepherd on the Livia Primitiva sarcophagus). Later images of the shepherd-criophoros tend to be static, non-functional, and purely symbolic, A. Ferrua, *Epigraphica* II, 1940, 17-19 and *Riv AC* 38, 1962, 67-69, has argued a third century date on epigraphic grounds; Ferrua points out correctly (contra Quasten, *art. cit.*) that the name, Beratius Nikatoras, need not be taken as proof that the deceased was from Asia Minor. T. Klauser, *JbAC* 10, 1967, 112, challenged the traditional third century dating of the grave slab by arguing that the *crux monogrammata*, ⳨ , does not appear in Christian epigraphy until the fourth century. But the form of the monogrammed cross, called the staurogram, which appears in the Beratius Nikatoras inscription has a longer Christian history than Klauser suggests; cf. E. Dinkler, *art.cit.*, 177; F.J. Dölger, *op.cit.* I, 353-386; R. Mesnil du Buisson, "Sur quelques signes Chrétiens", *RivAC* 23/24, 1947-1948, 313-325; J.J. Kotsonis, *TA XPONOΛOΓIKA ZHTHMATA TOY CTAYPOY KAI TΩN MONOΓPAMMATΩN ☧ KAI ⳨*, Athens, 1939 (there the older literature); note also the probably third century cover of the Livia Primitiva sarcophagus, *WS*, Tav. 251/1. If the Beratius Nikatoras grave slab is of early third century date then it constitutes important testimony to the realistic and materialistic conception of the after-life which characterized many early Christian funerary beliefs. According to one commentator, all of early Christian funerary cult should be understood as a part of the pagan *refrigerium* meal; cf. A. Stuiber, *Refrigerium Interim*, Bonn, 1957. These were meals which involved ceremonial eating and drinking at the gravesite and at which food was left for the Christian souls languishing in Hades. According to Stuiber (following Klauser), all of the early Christian meal iconography must be understood realistically, as the visual expression of the then prevailing funerary cult practices. But Stuiber has overstated the ubiquity and the universality of this motif; cf. J.M.C. Toynbee, JThS 9/1, 1958, 141-149; L. de Bruyne, "Refrigerium Interim", RivAC 34, 1958, 87-118. The meal which Christians celebrated at the gravesite must have resembled the pagan meal in great degree; in the latter drunkenness was common. Augustine, among others, was anxious to have the meal outlawed for Christians; cf. J. Quasten, "Vetus Superstitio et Nova Religio: the Problem of the Refrigerium in the Ancient Church of North Africa", HTR 33, 1940, 253-266. The holes carved into the Beratius Nikatoras grave slab appear on other early Christian monuments; cf. E. Kitziner, "A Marble Relief of the Theodosian Period", DOP 14, 25,26/n. 23-26.

4. Brignoles, 58 km. east of Aix-en-Provence (installed as of July, 1969 in the Municipal Museum). Philosophy sarcophagus, only the front frieze, which has been sawed away from its sides and bottom, is exhibited in the museum. The frieze was formerly installed in the north western apse of the church of St. Sauveur, and before that was in a cella trichora on the property near Brignoles known as La Gayole. The inscription on the upper molding above the frieze front is of a later date. The frieze shows, from the left to right, the bust of Helios, fisher, sheep, anchor, female orans, sheep, seated philosopher (upper two-thirds destroyed), small girl (head destroyed), shepherd-criophoros, sheep, seated male figure holding a sceptre (identified as a mountain god by Gerke, Pluto by Weigand). It is generally agreed that this monument, together with its companion pieces, nos. 5 and 6 below, is of paramount importance for the history of early Christian sculpture. But its place within that history is disputed. H. von Schönebeck, "Die christlichen Paradeisossarkophage", RivAc 14, 1937, 289-343, sees the La Gayole sarcophagus as the first in a series of Christian productions, dating from the early third century (ca. A.D. 225-230), which share a common idyllic motif and are derived typologically from Ionian models. E. Weigand, art.cit., 415ff., follows von Schönebeck and is critical of Gerke, op.cit., 271-273 who makes the La Gayole sarcophagus depend on sarcophagus 424 in the Torlonia collection and the so-called Plotinus relief in the Museo Pio Clementino. Gerke's classification of the La Gayole sarcophagus as compositionally a variant of the tree-sarcophagus type ("Baumgliederung") is misleading. The compositional principle at work in the sarcophagi of the third century (pagan and Christian) is the principle of centrality; the central field or tabula is normally

the determinative factor in any compositional sequence. Gerke has overstated the importance of trees as frame elements and compositional articulation here and elsewhere. In composition the La Gayole sarcophagus can be profitably compared with the Berlin Jonah sarcophagus and with the so-called "Lady" sarcophagus, known also as the "window" sarcophagus, Lateran 128. In iconography the La Gayole sarcophagus should be classified as a type of philosophy sarcophagus. In style there is general agreement that the La Gayole sarcophagus has important parallels in monuments known to derive from the west coast of Asia Minor; Gerke, *op.cit.*, 269, believed that the La Gayole sarcophagus was executed in Gaul. The matter of the provenance of this monument is very important and needs to be investigated anew; J.B. Ward-Perkins has provided the model of future research in this area: "The Hippolytus Sarcophagus from Trinquetaille", *JRS* 46, 1956, 10-16; "Roman garland sarcophagi from the quarries of Proconnesus (Marmara)", *Smithsonian Report for 1957*, Washington, D.C., 1958, 455-467. Provence is rich in mineral deposits which were exploited in antiquity, as in more recent history. The prodigious supply of bauxite which since 1822 has flowed from veins underneath Les Baux-de-Provence and the surrounding region (including to the east Brignoles in the Var) has tended to obscure our awareness of the marble quarries in the same region. An obvious detail which has been largely ignored in the study of lapidary arts in antiquity is where the raw materials come from. This is the first factor which needs to be determined for the La Gayole sarcophagus, and more generally for the Christian workshop productions in the lapidary museums of Arles and Marseille; cf. F. Benoit, "Sarcophages Paleochrétien d'Arles et de Marseille", *Gallia* 5 (Supplement A), Paris, 1954. Consistent with his rejection of the possibility of a proto-Christian art, T. Klauser, *JbAC* 3, 1960, 112-127, identifies the La Gayole sarcophagus as a purely pagan monument.

5. Città del Vaticano (Museo Pio Cristiano, formerly in the Museo Cristiano Lateranense; cf. Deichmann (Bovini, Brandenburg), *op.cit.*, no. 66). The famous sarcophagus from the via Salaria is shaped in the form of a tub and has been heavily restored. It shows from left to right a ram, a sundial in a column, a seated bearded philosopher holding a scroll, flanked left and right by standing male auditors, just slightly to the left of center is a standing shepherd criophoros flanked by sheep and trees, a seated female orans holding a scroll in her left hand flanked to the left by a standing female orans and to the right

by another standing female figure, and at the end of the tub, another ram. This monument shows a certain compositional resemblance to the above-mentioned (no.1) lion sarcophagus type; for an opposite view cf. Weigand, *art. cit.*, 418/n.2. The salvation figure, the shepherd-criophoros, occupies the middle ground of the frieze, and at the extremeties rams have replaced lions. A philosophy group to the left and an orans group to the right (the seated woman is a philosophy type as well--she holds a scroll) occupy fields which were filled with fluting in the lion sarcophagus type; cf. *WS*, Tav. 60/4. Gerke, *op.cit*. 244, 245, draws the parallel of the via Salaria sarcophagus with the Berlin Jonah sarcophagus and with the above mentioned "Lady" or "Window" sarcophagus, Lateran no. 128; cf. Deichmann (Bovini, Brandenburg), *op.cit*., 32. Once again Gerke sees the "Baumgliederung" as compositionally determinative; but it seems just as likely that the flanking trees are to be understood visually as attributes of the shepherd, e.g., *WS*, Tav. 60/4. Convincing compositional parallels are in the Palazzo Corsini, *WS*, Tav. 69/3 and in the Castello Sforzesco, Milan, *WS*, Tav. 252/2. Judging this monument in the light of eastern models, Schönebeck, *art.cit.*, 316-323, 336ff., (and following him Weigand, *art.cit.*, 417ff.) dates the sarcophagus from the via Salaria to ca. A.D. 235. Gerke, *op.cit*., 234ff., argues that all of the sarcophagi which are compositional variants of the tree sarcophagus type, including the sarcophagus from the via Salaria, should be assigned to the Gallienic "Renaissance; a perceptive criticism of Gerke's chronology is given by Weigand, *art.cit*., 417ff. T. Klauser, *JbAC* 3, 1960, 114ff., rejects the Christian interpretation of the sarcophagus from the via Salaria.

6. Rome, Forum Romanum (Church of Sta. Maria Antiqua al Foro Romano; cf. Deichmann(Bovini, Brandenburg), *op.cit*. no. 747). Also in the form of a tub, the sarcophagus from Sta. Maria Antiqua shows from left to right the seated Poseidon holding a trident and resting on a jar from which flows water, an orans figure and a helmsman standing on the deck of a boat with its sails drawn up, the *ketos* with Jonah to the right at rest under the bower, sheep are standing on the bower, a standing female orans figure, head rough hewn (unfinished portrait cf. H. Marrou, MOYCIKOC ANHP, Grenoble, 1938, 92, 181ff.) flanked by trees and a bird below to the right, a seated philosopher, head rough hewn (unfinished portrait) holding a scroll,

a shepherd criophoros flanked by trees and sheep, John baptizing Jesus (*impositio manus*), dove above to the left over the baptizand and two fishers pulling on their nets. Gerke, *op.cit.*, 262-266 classifies this monument, with greater justification, as a compositional variant of the tree sarcophagus type. The "Baumgliederung" only becomes functional to the right of the resting Jonah; the tree which issues from Jonah's loin is dysfunctional and may be said to be out of place in this maritime context. Gerke regards the sarcophagus from Sta. Maria Antiqua as a product of a Roman workshop which was under influences from the east; he assigns it to the Gallienic period, whereas von Schönebeck and Weigand suggest a date ca. A.D. 230. The sarcophagus from Sta. Maria Antiqua is a philosophy sarcophagus; it includes two scenes which are directly inspired by Biblical prototypes. The first of these is baptism; cf. J. Coppens, *L'Imposition des mains et les rites connexes dan le Nouveau Testament et dans l 'Eglise ancienne*, Diss., Fac. de théologie de l 'Univ. de Louvain, 2e serie/fasc. 15, Wetteren, 1925, 427; L. de Bruyne, "L'imposition des mains dans l'art chrétien ancien", *RivAC* 20, 1943, 212-247. The second Biblical scene is one of the most popular in all of early Christian art; it shows Jonah at rest under the bower. The boat scene to the left should be understood as a part of the Jonah typology. The orans figure on the deck of the boat has important parallels in the orans of the storm scene on the north wall of cubiculum A/2 in the Callixtus catacomb and in the orans on the cover of the Baebia Hertofile sarcophagus. According to Stuiber, *op.cit.*, 139, this is the image of a man "wie im Schrecken, die Arme nach oben..." It would be more correct to suggest that it is a variant of the orans posture in which the hands are held fully outstretched; cf. *WS*. Tav. 4/3, 9/3, 65/5. The orans figure may be depicted with arms close to the body, e.g., *WS*, Tav. 2/1, 3/4, or semi-outstretched, e.g., *WS*. Tav. 1.2,3; cf. W. Neuss, "Die Oranten in der altchristlichen Kunst", *Festschrift Paul Clemen*, Düsseldorf, 1926, 133-135. Normally the fullest form of Jonah representations in early Christian art is tripartite: Jonah is shown cast overboard and swallowed by the *ketos*, Jonah is shown spewed forth from the mouth of the *ketos*, and Jonah is shown after his ordeal at rest under the bower of gourd plant.

In 1950 exacations in the catacomb of San Sebastiano uncovered a cubiculum with frescoes of what appears to be a four-fold Jonah cycle. The additional scene shows the prophet scampering onto a rock after having been spewed forth from the whale; cf. A. Ferrua, "Paralipomeni di Giona", RivAC 38, 11, Fig. 4. If the attribution made by Wixom, op.cit., 75, figs. 31,32, proves to be correct, then the standing figure in the orans posture is to be construed as Jonah at prayer. But these are isolated examples, each of them unique in comparative Jonah iconography. The majority of Jonah representations in the visual arts of early and medieval Christianity show either the tripartite cycle or some part of that sequence. The most famous lapidary examples of the three fold sequence are found on the Roman Jonah sarcophagi which date from the late third or early fourth century: Lat. 119, WS, Tav. 9/3 and Glyptothek Ny Carlsberg, Copenhagen, n. 832 from Porta Angelica, Rome, WS, Tav. 59/3; cf. Gerke, op.cit., 38—51. The sarcophagus of Sta. Maria Ant. shows only a part of the tripartite cycle. To the left of the reclining prophet is seen the boat from which, within the full cycle, Jonah is cast overboard. The original maritime context of the Jonah cycle is clear; Poseidon sits on one of the curved ends and fishers sit on the other. Stuiber, op.cit., 141, reiterates a well-known theory, namely that the representation of Jonah reclining under the gourd plant is the oldest theme within the Jonah cycle to appear in visual form. This had been suggested in the last century by Hasenclever and Schultze and was incorporated into O. Mitius, Jonas auf den Denkmälern des christlichen Altertums, Freiburg, 1897, 12, 59, 87, 88, 93. In his "Parilipomeni di Giona", RivAC 38, 1962, 55, A. Perrua denied that Jonah under the bower was the first of the Jonah themes to appear in early Christian art, but Ferrua has not said the last word on this subject.

The composition of the sarcophagus from Sta. Maria Antiqua includes images of sheep on top of the bower under which Jonah lies. They may have been placed there for reasons of design or for reasons of theology. The moral of the Jonah story is drawn from the plant. Jonah is capable of feeling sorry for the plant but is insensitive to the 120,000 inhabitants of Nineveh and their livestock. Jonah is disappointed that God will not destroy them. The sheep may appear here in close connection with the plant as symbols of the creation whose importance Jonah misunderstood.

There is one other class of object which requires brief mention here, namely lamps. We do not know when Christians first began to place their own religious images on clay lamps. The majority of the clay lamps which survive and which are thought to be the oldest products bearing Christian iconography are of

Italian provenance. But the typologies and accompanying chronologies for these lamps have never been clearly established; cf. H. Leclercq, "Lampes", DACL 8/1, 1086-1221; M.G. Abbiani, Lucerne fittili Paleo cristiane nell 'Italia settentrionale, Bologna, 1969; M.L. Bernhard, Lampki Starozytne, Warsaw, 1955, 49ff. (there the older literature). The relationship between Jewish images on clay lamps and Christian productions needs to be considered anew; cf. M. Nilsson, "Lampen und Kerzen im Kult der Antike", AIRRS 15, Opuscula Archeologica 6, 1950, 104; E. Goodenough, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman World I, Princeton, 1953, 139-164; C.A. Kennedy, "The development of the lamp in Palestine" Berytus 14/2, 1963, 67-115; R.H. Smith, "The 'Herodian' lamp of Palestine, Types and Dates", Berytus 14/1, 1961, 53-65. It has been suggested that the oldest surviving examples of clay lamps bearing Christian or proto-Christian iconography (Orpheus, shepherd-criophoros) are the workshop productions of the well known potter, Annius Serapiodorus, who probably worked in Ostia; cf. H. Leclercq, "Anniser", DACL I/2, 2223-2230; T. Klauser, JbAC I, 1958, 33,34 (rejects the Christian identification of these objects).

Just as they expressed their opposition to Christian participation in funerary cult meals, so also Christian authors criticized the Christian use of lamps, candles, and torches in the cult of the dead. One of the most important sources for this aversion is contained in the acts of the provincial synod at Elvira; cf. F. Cumont, "Dierges et lampes sur les tombeaux", Miscellanea Giovanni Mercati 5, Città del Vaticano, 1946, 41-47 (there the older literature). Christian opposition to the use of lamps in the funerary cult had nothing to do with the images which appeared on these objects. Lamps, candles, and torches had acquired cultual associations of idolatry and superstition, and it was for this reason that they were opposed. The iconography which appears on early Christian clay lamps shows close similarity to Christian iconography known from other contexts; cf. M. Bauer, Der Bilderschmuck frühchristlicher Tonlampen, Griefswald, 1907 (the orans motif does not figure prominently on lamps).

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Appendix II

Proto-Christian Images.

The correct historical understanding of proto-Christian imagery (called alternately crypto-Christian imagery) is crucial to the argument of the present study. Proto-Christian images are, first of all, images which are inspired by neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament. They are images which appear in an early Christian context but which, as iconographic types, existed prior to Christianity and quite apart from it. Proto-Christian images may be decorative or symbolic; if the latter they normally carry iconological associations which are intentionally generic and universal in character. The interpretation of proto-Christian imagery often involves a degree of imprecision and guesswork; hence they are sources which historians incline to avoid.

In their conception of historiography, historians of early Christianity reflect a view which is commonly held among all historians, namely that it is the written word alone which is worthy of investigation. In the Preface to his monumental, The Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World, Oxford, 1941, x, M. Rostovtzeff wrote that the illustrations which he had chosen to accompany the text were not "intended to amuse the reader.... They form an important constituent part of my work...." Historians generally leave the study of monuments to archaeologists and art historians; hence what we know about most monuments is their typological definition and their place in the comparative evolution of form. Unlike most historians, Rostovtzeff understood that monuments are documents of social history, and that they should be exploited as such.

In the study of early Christianity neglect of non-written sources is endemic and has resulted in serious distortions in the reconstruction of the early Christian past. Naturally, the attraction to the written word is great; it is of perennial interest to read Paul and John, Origen and Athanasius. But historians sometimes forget that these four men were exceptionally gifted; their achievements in intellectual and spiritual expression cannot be taken as representative of their communities at large. Many of the surviving images of early Christianity, especially the frequent graffiti which accompany inscriptions, represent the other end of the intellectual or spiritual spectrum of early Christianity. The historian's neglect of such sources will often be connected with his contempt for the social reality to which they point.

The only fact of which we are certain is that proto-Christian imagery existed at an early date in Christian history. How early is unknown; who made these images, where and why is also largely problematic. Proto-Christian images are important for the social and religious history of early Christianity because they relate directly to the problem of transition and conversion from one religious tradition and symbol system to another. Important research has been done concerning the symbolic images which were introduced in imperial circles during the fourth century Christianization of the west. But the transition from non-Christian to Christian began before the fourth century, in circles other than those of the court. Symbolic visual images were employed to adumbrate that transition long before Constantine introduced the *labarum*; on the latter, cf. P. Bruun, "The Christian Signs on the Coins of Constantine," *Arctos*, N.S. 2, 1958, 15-37, and by the same author, *Roman Imperial Coinage* VII, London, 1966 (there the older literature).

A word concerning terminology is required here. Proto-Christian and crypto-Christian may be used somewhat interchangeably; both point to the same reality and express its different aspects. Proto-Christian is, I believe, a more general and more comprehensive designation and is to be preferred in most cases. Proto-Christian expresses succinctly and accurately the fact that the images in question stand, in relationship to the overall history of Christian art, at the beginning. They are, in other words, a point of departure in the establishment and development of the iconographic repertory of Christian art.

There are two kinds of images which stand at the beginning of early Christian art. The first of these are the soteriological paradigms which are commonly associated with the frescoes of the Roman catacombs and with early third century sarcophagi, but which are also preserved at Dura and on various objects which are classified as minor arts. The iconography of these images is Biblically inspired, and their *terminus a quo* is traditionaly thought to reach back to the early third century. This latter date should not be construed as absolute; it is not impossible that Christians produced Biblical images prior to the third century. Soteriological paradigms of Biblical inspiration are not our direct concern in this Appendix.

The second kind of early Christian image is our direct and immediate concern. I refer here to a corpus of symbols which appear in a Christian context for the first time at an undetermined date. These are not images which were Biblically inspired (although they may in isolated examples be harmonized with Biblical traditions, e.g., the shepherd-criophoros). Instead these symbols are part of the common heritage of Hellenistic and Greco-Roman art. They appear in diverse contexts within paganism and are known also as part of the heritage of Jewish art in late antiquity; they are, for instance, the subject of E. Goodenough's, Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period, N.Y., 1953ff., esp. vol. 4/43ff. There is no consensus about the point in time when these symbols first entered a Christian milieu; that point may be as early as the first century or as late as the early third century. To establish the chronology of these symbols would require first that the chronology of pre-Constantinian Christian inscriptions be fixed. If this task is ever successfully accomplished, we might learn that the lines of development among the common symbols of paganism, Judaism, and Christianity were never truly interrupted and hence that the survival and evolution of these symbols was relatively constant among all three traditions throughout the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman periods.

The term, proto-Christian expresses well the open-ended and indeterminate character of these symbols. These are symbols which stand at the beginning of early Christian art as that beginning is traditionally defined; but they survive in non-Christian form from the period before the beginning of early Christian art and constitute one of its material sources. "Proto-Christian" gives emphasis to both aspects of these symbolic images, i.e., that they are at the beginning and that they are before the beginning.

"Crypto-Christian" is also a useful and sometimes accurate designation for this body of symbolic images, although it is necessarily a more limited term and is a term which has acquired certain unfortunate associations due to extravagant claims which have been made in its name; cf. M. Guarducci, I graffiti sotto la confessione di San Pietro, Città del Vaticano, 1958, and critical reviews by A. Ferrua, "La criptografia mistica ed i graffiti Vaticani," RivAC 35, 1959, 231-247, and J.M.C. Toynbee, "Graffiti beneath St. Peter's. Professor Guarducci's Interpretation," The Dublin Review 1959, 234-244. P.E. Testa's, Il Simbolismo dei Giudei Cristiani, Jerusalem, 1962, ranks with Guarducci's study of crypto-Christian, mystical epigraphy. Crypto-Christian expresses the hidden or secret aspect of proto-Christian imagery; it is, however, a term which must be used with caution.

If certain proto-Christian images are correctly designated as crypto-Christian, then it is important to know who was hiding what from whom. It is possible that the Christians who cultivated images in their funerary or liturgical places during the pre-Constantinian period wanted to hide their images (and hence disguise their identity) from government officialdom and from their unsympathetic non-Christian neighbors. It has also been suggested that the Christians who cultivated images during this period observed a kind of *disciplina arcana*, and hence were anxious to hide the inner meaning of their sect from their own initiates or catechumens until their day of ἐπόπτεια. The general theory which underlies this view pictures Christianity as a form of mystery religion, and it is a theory which has attracted considerable attention. The possible early existence of a Christian arcane discipline has been explored at length in relationship to such monuments as the famous inscription of Bishop Abercius; cf. H. Strathmann, T. Klauser, "Abercius," *RlAC* I, 1950, 12-17 (there the older literature). But the evidence for a cultic rule of secrecy among Christians is late and is not documented for the first two centuries of the new religion. In his *Apol.* I/61ff., 65/7, Justin spoke openly about details of the Christian cult; so did the Christians who were arraigned before Pliny. These evidences speak against the existence of a rule of secrecy, or arcane discipline, at an early stage in Christian history, and hence tend to contradict the notion that church members were bound by rule to maintain secrecy about the iconography which adorned the walls of their funerary and cult places; cf. O. Perler, "Arkandisziplin," *RlAC* I, 1950, 667-676 (there the older literature). Of course, Christianity was *religio illicita*, and it is at least probable that most Christians would have been discrete in expressing their beliefs visually. But this discretion should not be confused with the existence of a so-called *disciplina arcana*, which concerns a cultic rule of secrecy. Proto-Christian images were many of the same images which were known universally and from time immemorial among pagans and among Jews. Hence we can imagine that the display of such images by Christians would not provoke any exceptional controversy or commotion. Christians, for instance, adorned their funerary places along the congested via Appia with symbolic images, some of them Biblical, some of them proto-Christian, well within sight of their neighbors and the local police station; this hardly suggests that secrecy and obscurity were highest in their list of priorities. Many of their images were proto-Christian, but they were also crypto-Christian, that is they were the same images which could be found in non-Christian places; their cryptic or hidden character consisted in the fact that the same images were now to be understood relative to a new myth and a new revelation.

The iconographic studies of proto-Christian images abound. Probably the best known of these and most widely consulted is F.J. Dölger's *IXΘUC*, Münster, 1922-1943, but there are many more. Unfortunately there has never been a comprehensive study of these images comparable to E. Goodenough's, *Jewish Symbols*.... The most comprehensive presentation of proto-Christian imagery, on a much more modest scale than Goodenough's work, is P. Bruun's essay, "Symboles, Signes et Monogrammes," *AIRF* I/2, 1963, 73-166, which contains a comprehensive listing of proto-Christian images, based on the inscriptions in the Galleria Lapidaria of the Vatican museum, together with brief discussions of individual images and essential bibliographic information; a similar listing of images accompanying the Latin Christian inscriptions of North Africa was drawn up for *CIL* by H. Instinsky, as noted above chapter two, 61/n.98. In his inventory Bruun lists the following images: agnus, ancora, asinus, calix, caput velatum, columba, corona, crux, delphinus, dolium, flagellum, folium, genius, libra, loulab, modius, navis, nimbus, olea, orans, palma, pampinus, panis, pastor bonus, pharos, phoenix, piscis, ramus oleae, serpens, tabella, tridens, vas, vitis, uvae. In their early Christian context, many of these images serve a primarily decorative function. This issue, whether symbol or decoration, has been debated endlessly among students of late antique art. We have already noted the works of Guarducci and Testa who among students of early Christianity represent the maximalist symbolic approach, the tendency, as stated by one commentator, to see "hinter jedem Pinselstreich geheimnisvolle Weisheit und tiefsten Sinngehalt," W. Elliger, *Die Stellung der alten Christen zu den Bildern in den ersten vier Jahrhunderten II (Zur Entstehung und frühen Entwicklung der altchristlichen Bildkunst)*, Leipzig, 1934, 83. A.D. Nock's reviews of Goodenough's, *Jewish Symbols*.... and of F. Cumont's, *Recherches sur le Symbolisme Funéraire des Romains*, Paris, 1942, represent the opposite, minimalist approach, the tendency to deny or at least question the possible symbolic function of all late antique imagery; cf. *AJA* 50, 1946, 140-170. In the study of early

Christian imagery this latter approach was defended by H. Lother, Der Pfau in der altchristlichen Kunst. Eine Studie über Verhältnis von Ornament und Symbol, Leipzig, 1929.

Of all the oldest examples of proto-Christian imagery none plays a role of such central importance as the figure of the shepherd carrying a ram. Generally it is agreed that this is a symbolic image, although it can function in a decorative capacity as well. This may be true, for instance, in the case of the well-known Lateran sarcophagus 181, cf. JbAC 1, 1958, 39-41. It is on the basis of the shepherd-criophoros figure that T. Klauser has challenged the traditional definition of proto-Christian imagery. In the annual installments of his "Studien zur Entstehungsgeschichte der christlichen Kunst," Klauser has called for a systematic rethinking of the foundations of early Christian art. His conclusions are nothing short of revolutionary: the twin pillars of proto-Christian imagery, as traditionally conceived, namely the shepherd-criophoros and the orans figure, are symbolic images which embody meanings relative to paganism alone. They are not Christian symbols, even when they appear in a Christian context; on the shepherd-criophoros, cf. JbAC 1, 1958, 20-51, 2, 1960, 112-133, 5, 1962, 113-124, 7, 1964, 67-76, 8/9, 1965/66, 126-170, 10, 1967, 82-120, and for the orans, cf. JbAC 2, 1959, 115-145, 3, 1960, 112-133, 7, 1964, 67-76. Klauser summarized his theory in his "Erwägungen zur Entstehungsgeschichte der altchristlichen Kunst," ZKG 76, 1965, 1-11. If Klauser is correct (and there has been remarkably little criticism of his theoretical reconstructions), then the consequences of his work for the study of early Christian art and archaeology are momentous; cf. reivews by J. M. C. Toynbee, JThS 10/2, 1959, 393, 12/1, 1961, 96, 13/1, 1962, 159, 14/2, 1963, 490, 15/2, 1964, 392, 17/1, 1966, 150, 17/2, 1966, 466, 19/1, 1968, 321, 20/1, 1969, 290. According to Klauser, the shepherd-criophoros and the orans figure no longer admit of Christian interpretation; hence they must be deleted from the iconographic repertory of early Christianity. Artifacts marked with this iconography, previously thought to be Christian, must be excised from the inventory of early Christian monuments.

Klauser's theory requires closer investigation; it consists of essentially three components. First, Klauser observes that the shepherd-criophoros figure was not a Christian "Neuschöpfung," but was instead a well-known symbolic image prior to Christian usage. Klauser adduces surviving examples of the shepherd-criophoros figure from the civilizations of the ancient near east, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Anatolia, from Greece, from the Greco-Italic culture of provincial Italy (Etruscan), from the Hellenistic and the Greco-Roman worlds; cf. *JbAC* 1, 1958, 27ff. There is no faulting Klauser on this point; his evidence is indisputable. Examples of the shepherd-criophoros figure survive, mostly in sculpted form, from the second milennium B.C. onward. This fact was well known and amply documented by earlier generations of scholars, e.g., M. Veyries, *Les figures criophores dans l'art grec, l'art greco-romain et l'art chrétien*, Paris, 1884 and M. Raoul-Rochette, *Trois Mémoires sur les Antiquités Chrétiennes, Premier Mémoire*, Paris, 1838, 1-19. The shepherd-criophoros figure in visual form was not the invention of Christianity.

Klauser's second point concerns the symbolic identification of the shepherd-criophoros figure in its pre-Christian context. For heuristic purposes Klauser introduces an "Arbeitshypothese:" the shepherd-criophoros figure, especially in its historical context immediately prior to the advent of Christianity (i.e., as Hermes-criophoros), embodies or personifies φιλανθρωπία, i.e., "Menschenfreundlichkeit," *humanitas*, the moral virtue of care and concern vis à vis one's neighbor which was fashionable in the Hellenistic and later Greco-Roman worlds; cf. *JbAC* 1, 1958, 31ff., 3, 1960, 125-127. According to Klauser, his "working hypothesis" was confirmed progressively as his research proceeded apace; cf. *JbAC* 1, 1958, 31/n.51. But Klauser does not tell his reader how this "working hypothesis" was confirmed or who confirmed it. Literary or epigraphic confirmation of the equation, shepherd-criophoros= φιλανθρωπία personified, is conspicuous by its absence. On this point Klauser's theory is unproved; his own precipitous judgments need careful testing against the extant epigraphic and literary sources. The evidence may well prove to point in quite a contrary direction, that is, if there was ever an association of the shepherd-criophoros figure, as a visual type, with φιλανθρωπία, then this association may have been the product of Christianity; cf. D. Krstitch, *St. John Chrysostom, Theologian of Divine Philanthropy*, unpubl. ThD. Diss., Harvard Univ., Cambridge, Mass., 1968 (there the older literature). The identification of the shepherd-criophoros figure as a personification of the virtue, φιλανθρωπία may be properly said to constitute the keystone of Klauser's theory.

Parenthetically, we might note that Klauser makes a similar identification of the orans figure, which he takes to be the personification of ευσέβεια - pietas, "jene Tugend, welche den Menschen geneigt macht seine Pflichten gegen den Eltern und die Kinder, überhaupt gegen die Angehörigen der Familie, der Sippe des Geschlechts zu erfüllen," *JbAC* 2, 1959, 117. Klauser's evidence in this case is irrefutable; his study includes a catalogue of late Republican coins bearing the orans image with the superscription, "Pietas;" cf. *JbAC* 2, 1959, 131-145. Whether the orans figure retains precisely this signification when it occurs in a Christian context is still another question. Traditionally the orans figure is thought to be an eschatological image, the representation of the blessed soul in paradise; cf. W. Neuss, *Die Oranten in der altchristlichen Kunst*, *Festschrift Paul Clemen*, Düsseldorf, 1926, 130-149, P. Bruun, *art.cit.*, 134-142.

The third and most crucial aspect of Klauser's theory concerns the identification of the shepherd-criophoros figure when it appears in a Christian context. This image was extremely popular among early Christians; it survives in a diversity of material forms from a variety of different places and hence its identification is a matter of no little importance for the study of early Christianity. Stated simply, Klauser argues that this figure continued to embody pagan φιλανθρωπία even in its Christian context; the shepherd-criophoros did not represent Jesus the good shepherd to the early Christians who placed this image so ubiquitiously within their domestic and cultic environs. This third aspect of Klauser's theory of symbol is only as tenable as the equation, shepherd-criophoros equals φιλανθρωπία personified. We have already seen that this equation is in fact not tenable or is at least in need of positive demonstration and confirmation from evidence provided by literary or epigraphic sources. Hence this third aspect of Klauser's theory of symbol is flawed from the outset.

But if, for heuristic purposes, we grant the validity of Klauser's "working hypothesis," if, that is, we accept as correct the above-named equation, still the question of the symbolic signification of the shepherd-criophoros would remain unanswered. What is a Christian symbol? Is it an objective reality, a subjective reality, or some combination of the two? Klauser, unlike Goodenough, never explains his theory of symbol to his reader, and thus we are put in the uncomfortable position of having to infer the theory from its application. One point is clear; Klauser believes in the objectivity of Christian symbols and Christian images. Klauser writes that the mere act of viewing an image from a Christian perspective and seeing in it Christian meaning does not make the image a Christian image. To be Christian an image must be stamped with objective Christian content "von vornherein." A neutral or "purely ornamental" image does not become Christian until it is brought into relationship with a Christian (i.e., Biblical) image; cf. JbAC 8/9, 1965/1966, 134. An instructive parallel exists in the example of early Christian architecture. The architecture of the Dura house church is domestic. Were it not for the graffiti and paintings in room 6, the building would not be identifiable as a Christian house church. At the beginning of chapter three we saw that Christians often gathered in houses or apartments. We may presume that also these structures contained no objective architectural and structural characteristics by which they might have been identified as Christian. They were Christian buildings because Christians gathered in them and used them for cultic and other purposes. But they were not Christian buildings in any objective structural sense. Panofsky's critical typology is useful here. Klauser believes that the secondary or conventional subject matter (iconography) of Christian symbolism is objectively determined, which, for Klauser, means that it is Biblically determined. Klauser also believes that the intrinsic meaning or content of Christian symbolism is objectively determined relative to an accepted body of belief and a church authority (hence his "Kirchenkunst" or "Bischofskunst" which is the product of the fourth century and which replaces the eclectic, quasi-Christian art of the third century). For the most part, Klauser is not concerned with the first level of Panofsky's typology, that is, the symbol's primary or natural subject matter. Klauser's theory amounts to archaeological Biblicism or fundamentalism.

We have already noted that there are two kinds of visual images which appear in early Christianity, those which are inspired by Biblical experience and those which are not. It would be foolish to deny that the former possess a certain objective form and content; their objectivity in these matters is a function of the Biblical narration itself. But we will see when we look at the exegetical background of the shepherd-criophoros image that the Biblical metaphor is itself a reworking of older, pre-Christian written materials, is, in other words, as a literary symbol both fluid and multidimensional. In summary, a Christian symbol is as much a subjective reality as it is an objective reality; this is in fact the meaning of *interpretatio cristiana*. If, when I see a fish, I see Jesus, then the fish becomes a Christian symbol, at least for me. The point is obvious and does not require any further elaboration here. Klauser's theory of symbol is inadequate because it fails to account for *interpretatio cristiana*. The consequences of this are unfortunate; many images which were surely regarded as Christian, or potentially Christian, by the early generations of Christians are simply deleted from the iconographic repertory of early Christian art. The most striking omission in this regard is the figure of the shepherd-criophoros.

There is a long-standing tradition within the practice of early Christian archaeology of identifying the shepherd-criophoros figure with the Jesus, the ποιμην ὁ καλός, described in pericopes 10/11 and 10/14 of the Fourth Gospel; cf. A. Bosio, *Roma subterranea* (ed. P. Aringhi), Rome, 1651, 551-554. The shepherd-criphoros is identified as the Johannine Jesus, and the identification is popularly broadened to include the shepherd which appears in the extended allegory of the kingdom, *Lk*. 15/3ff. If it is correct to call the Christology of the New Testament functional, then one of the actions ("Funktionen") by which the identity of Jesus is revealed is his shepherding; his special form of shepherding involves personal sacrifice even to the point of self-sacrificial death. The model shepherd, unlike his counterpart the cowardly (Pharisaic) hired hand, shepherds his flock nobly and is willing to go to his death to preserve life for his sheep.

We have already noted that the image of the shepherd-criophoros occurs with great frequency in all of the visual arts of early Christianity. Klauser has argued that the image had acquired a fixed symbolic meaning in its pre-Christian context and that this carried over into Christianity. When Christians saw the image of the shepherd carrying a ram, they identified this figure as φιλανθρωπία personified. They did not think of Jesus the good shepherd. As we have already noted, Klauser's claim is lacking in verification. But how do we know what Christians thought when they saw this image? After all, although it has been argued to the contrary, images do not "speak for themselves." External evidence, either epigraphic or literary, is required to illuminate the meaning of any given image. Otherwise the process of identification and ascribing meaning to images involves the problematic use of analogy and inference.

But one written source does survive which explicitly identifies the shepherd carrying the sheep as Jesus the good shepherd. In Pud. 7/1, Tertullian invites his opponents, the laxist Catholics, to bring forth their "calices" on which was pictured "ovis perdita a Domino requista et humeris eius rejecta;" on the date of Pud., cf. T.D. Barnes, Tertullian, Oxford, 1971, 30, 31, 44-48, 141, 221. Barnes, op.cit., 247, correctly rejects the notion that Pud. 21/10 refers to Callixtus, which reference would entail a date ca. 220 A.D. The treatise probably dates from a decade earlier, ca. 210/211. In Pud. 7/4, Tertullian lets it be understood that these same Catholics regarded their "pastor bonus" to be Christ; cf. J. Kollwitz, "Christusbild," RlAC 3, 1-24 Klauser's objection to the literal interpretation of this sequence amounts to a non sequitur: the fact that Tertullian objects to the identification of their shepherd with Christ, e.g. Pud. 10/12, does not mitigate or otherwise alter the literal meaning of Pud. 7/1ff. The contemporary Catholics of Carthage painted images of the shepherd carrying the sheep on their cups and they identified this figure as their good shepherd, Jesus; cf. JbAC 1, 1958, 24-27. Beyond the example provided by Tertullian there is no other contemporary literary evidence of an explicit association between the visual image of the shepherd carrying a sheep and Jesus the good shepherd.

Klauser argues that the sex of the animal portrayed on the shoulders of the shepherd is a determinative factor in identifying the symbolic value of the image. The visual image of the shepherd-criophoros cannot have been intended to refer to Jesus the good shepherd, argues Klauser, because the animal portrayed is male, the ram; had they intended an interpretatio cristiana, Christians would surely have altered this iconography to depict the female of the species, the ewe. The word used to denote the animal in the synoptic version of this narration and in John is πρόβατον. If the sex of the animal had been determinative, another word could have been used, e.g., ἡ ὄϊς, or πρόβατον could have been qualified by θῆλυ. The point, of course, is not that the shepherd discriminates against males and is concerned only with the salvation of female animals. There is an apparent confusion or conflation of materials here; in the Matthean judgment scene sheep and goats are separated, Mt. 25/32, 33. No point is made, however, of sexual distinctions within the species, ovis, viz., the distinction between rams and ewes; cf. The Gospel According to Thomas (A. Guillaumont, H.-Ch. Puech, G. Quispel, W. Till, Yassah 'Abd al Masih), Leiden/London, 1959, 53 (Logion 107: ⲉⲥⲟⲟⲩ), and J.M.C. Toynbee, JThS 10/2, 1959, 393.

I have already said the proto-Christian images are symbolic images which we know existed prior to Christianity. When they entered into a Christian milieu, these images acquired new levels of meaning relative to their new environment. Literary symbols underwent the same transposition and transsignification when they entered Christianity from without. A case in point is the shepherd figure~~,~~ which was already rich in symbolic associations before ~~it~~ appeared in the New Testament. One could seek the pre-Christian history of this symbol in pagan literary traditions, as Klauser has done. But since the tenth chapter of fourth gospel is structured in the form of an attack on the Pharisees, and since there is an abundance of pastoral symbolism in the Old Testament, there is good reason to look to the literature of Israel as well for the shepherding models which are elaborated in early Christianity.

Israel during the period of the tribal amphictyony and even after the conquest was a pastoral society in which the image of shepherding was common. Even in later history when agriculture became dominant, there remained a nostalgia for the pastoral. Yahweh might be pictured as the tender of the vine or planter of the seed, but he remained more familiarly the shepherd of the flock, Gen. 49/24, Ps. 23, 78/52-53. The Patriarchs, Moses and David were all shepherds, and shepherd became the figurative term for the rulers of Israel (as was common in numerous other near eastern and Hellenistic cultures). Impious kings were denounced as wicked shepherds.

Ezekiel, 34 is the immediate backdrop for John, 10. There Yahweh denounces the shepherd, or rulers, who have not cared for his flock, who have plundered it, neglecting the weak, the sick, and the straying. Yahweh promises that he will take his flock away from the wicked shepherds and will become himself their shepherd. Much of what Jesus says about shepherding in John and in the Synoptics reflects the background of Ezekiel, i.e., Mt. 18/12-13: Ez. 34/16 and Mt. 25/32: Ez. 34/20. The major point is that the shepherd image as recorded in the New Testament was by no means a creation de novo of Christianity. Jesus is portrayed by self-designation as a shepherd; he elaborates allegorically the particular qualities of his shepherding to an audience which we assume understood the shepherd image in its old and familiar context; cf. R. Brown, "Parable and Allegory Reconsidered," NovT 5, 1962, 36-45. The fact that the image was already a familiar one does not appear to have been a reason for Christians to avoid using it. To the contrary, its attraction seemed to consist precisely in its popularity and universality; cf. The Anchor Bible 29, The Gospel According to John 1-12 (trans., intro., notes by R. Brown), Garden City, 1966, 383-415.

The visual image of the shepherd-criophoros was also popular in pagan antiquity, although Klauser has overstated the frequency of its appearance in a relevant pre-Christian context. What is true of the literary image is true, *mutatis mutandis*, of the visual image, namely that its popularity and relative ubiquity in a pre-Christian context did not constitute a reason for Christians to avoid the use of this symbolic image. If anything the opposite seems to have held true.

Before we conclude this discussion of proto-Christian imagery a word should be said about Clement's famous statement on this subject, *Paed.* 3/59/2:

Αἱ δε σφραγῖδες ἡμῖν ἔστων
πελειὰς ἢ ἰχθὺς ἢ ναῦς
οὐριοδρομοῦσα ἢ λύρα μουσική,
ᾗ κέχρηται πολυκράτης, ἢ
ἄγκυρα ναυτική, ἣν Σέλευκος
ἐνεχαράττετο τῇ γλυφῇ, κἂν
ἁλιεύων τις ᾖ, ἀποστόλου
μεμνήσεται καὶ τῶν ἐξ
ὕδατος ἀνασπωμένων παιδίων.

Clement addresses himself here especially to Christian homeowners; they may wear signet rings with which they will seal their household possessions against theft. Clement envisions five separate images which Christians may have engraved into the stones which adorn their gold rings: a dove, a fish, a ship running in the wind, a lyre, and an anchor. It has been suggested that Clement admitted a sixth image to Christian usage, namely the image of a fisher. This depends however on the translation of κἂν ἁλιεύων τις ᾖ, ἀποστόλου μεμνήσεται... Traditionally this clause is translated: "and if someone is fishing, (or is a fisher; Klauser, following O. Stählin's translation in the BKV 2/8, 1934, 188, adds, "und sich deswegen einen Fisch als Siegelbild wählt," or alternately, "und sich deswegen einen Fischer als Siegelbild wählt," cf. JbAC 1, 1958, 22,23) he will be reminded (or will recall) the apostle..." If this is the correct translation then Clement's thought is that the anchor which Seleucus had engraved as his emblem would remind the fisher of Christian associations.

But Leo Eizenhöfer has challenged this traditional translation and interpretation in two provocative articles, JbAC 3, 1960, 51ff., JbAC 6, 1963, 173ff. Eizenhöfer's translation reads: "und wenn es (nämlich das Siegelbild) ein Fischer ist, dann wird es stets Apostel...ins Gedächtnis rufen." In other words, Eizenhöfer believes that τὶς is a pronoun which refers to σφραγίς, the subject of the whole sentence. He also believes that μεμνήσεται has a active meaning although its form is middle. A substantial objection has been raised against this theory, namely the absence of any corroborative syntactical evidence for μεμνήσεται understood in an active sense: "allein die mediale (Bedeutung) ist geläufig;" cf. H.D. Altendorf, "Die Siegelbildvorschlage des Clemens von Alexandrien," ZNTW 58, 1967, 131. Eizenhöfer's translation can be faulted on other grounds, which have escaped the notice of commentators; for instance, P. Bruun, art.cit., refers to Eizenhöfer's "l'analyse pénétrante." Eizenhöfer construes τὶς as the definite subject of ᾖ, which it is not. The clause can be translated, "if it (understood as part of ᾖ) is a (τὶς, i.e., some kind of) fisher, or it can be translated in the traditional way. τὶς is the indefinite pronoun used adjectively; cf. H.W. Smyth, Greek Grammar, Cambridge, Mass. 1963, 310/1267. In any event it does not refer to σφραγίς but instead modifies ἁλιεύων.

Either way one point remains unaltered, namely that the non-symbolic interpretations of this passage, as argued by Klauser and Altendorf, are demonstrably at variance with the literal meaning of the text. Clement's five (or six) images are called "purely decorative" by both Klauser and Altendorf. If the passage is translated in the traditional manner, then the anchor functions as a mnemonic and symbolic device. If the passage is translated so that the fisher is the sixth image, then that image functions symbolically.

We have discussed the matter of proto-Christian imagery only briefly here. A great deal more needs to be said. For present purposes it is sufficient to have demonstrated the probable existence of such imagery from an early date in Christian history. There is no final certainty in this matter; many of the monuments listed above in Appendix I admit of Christian interpretation. That they definitely were, or were not produced with Christian purposes in mind are certainties which do not inspire confidence; the sources themselves are too ambiguous.

If carried through systematically, the application of Klauser's theory of symbol would amount to the elimination of all proto-Christian imagery from the category of early Christian art. His argument concerning the shepherd-criophoros, which provides in a sense the test case of his theory, is simply not supported by the sources. Early Christianity was more than what was contained in Scripture. Klauser's failure to make proper note of this fact in elaborating his theory of symbol is all the more surprising when it issues from the pen of a Dölger disciple.

Appendix III

Gnostic art?

The historical existence of an expressly Gnostic form of visual art in the second and third centuries of the present era is problematic. This subject is important for the present study because, as I have already mentioned in the text, Gnostic art has been adduced in support of an iconophobic theory of the origins of early Christian art. Historians have pointed to the historical existence of Gnostic art in order to bolster the idea that image-making was originally foreign to orthodox Christianity and that iconophilic tendencies entered the mainstream of Christianity via Gnosticism. Accordingly, Gnostics, who were themselves image-makers and image-worshippers, encouraged the orthodox to depart from the aniconic norm of the past.

Thus the oldest surviving Christian images have a tainted origin, and according to the teleological argument, once tainted, always tainted. In the last century, Ernst Renan was one of the most eloquent and outspoken advocates of this interpretation:

> "Par son origine première, le christianisme était aussi contraire aux développements des arts plastiques que l'a été l'islam. Si le christianisme fût resté juif, l'architecture seule s'y fût développée, ainsi que cela est arrivé chez les musulmans; l'église eût été, comme la mosquée, une grandiose maison de prière, voilà tout. Mais les religions sont ce que les font les races qui les adoptent. Transporté chez les peuples amis de l'art, le christianisme devint une religion, aussi artistique qu'il l'eût été peu s'il fût resté entre les mains des judéo-chrétiens...L'histoire évangélique ne fût traitée par les premieres peintres chrétiens que partiellement et tardivement. C'est ici surtout que l'origine gnostique de ces images se voit avec évidence. La vie de Jésus que présentent les anciennes peintures chrétiennes est exactement celle que se figuraient les

> gnostiques et les docètes, c'est-à-dire que la Passion n'y figure pas....L'art chrétien était né hérétique; il en garda longtemps la trace; l'iconographie chrétienne se dégagea lentement des préjugés au milieu des quels elle était née. Elle n'en sortit que pour subir la domination des apocryphes, eux-mêmes plus ou moins nés sous une influence gnostique....",

excerpted from _Histoire des origines du Christianisme 7, Marc Aurele_, Paris, 1891, 540-546 (cf. _Histoire....6, L'église Chrétienne_, Paris, n.d., 495-519.

The points of Renan's interpretation read like a litany of Liberal Protestant beliefs: 1. Christianity was originally an aniconic-Semitic religion; 2. once communicated to non-Semitic, philiconic peoples it became a religion "aussi artistique"; 3. a narrative, Biblical iconography (especially the representation of the crucifixion) is conspicuously absent in the oldest monuments--this suggests that it was conceived by non-orthodox factions; 4. the initial inspiration of the birth of a Christian tradition of visual image-making must have come from an heretical, probably Gnostic, source. I do not draw in Renan's observations here merely for antiquarian interests; Renan represents a theory which still plays an important role in the study of early Christian art, e.g., T. Klauser, _ZKG_ 76, 1965, 7.

Basically there are two issues at stake in the theory of the Gnostic origins of early Christian art. First did Gnostics make visual images in the first, second, and third centuries? And second, if they did, was their image-making or the final product, their art, somehow decisive in influencing the establishment and development of early Christian art? A positive answer to the first question is traditionally accepted (and has been since the eighteenth century esp. under Gibbon's influence) on the basis of Irenaeus' account of the Carpocratians, _adv. Haer_. 1/20/4 and on the basis of certain supposedly Gnostic monuments of which the Tomb of the Aurelii in Rome's viale Manzoni is the most celebrated.

Irenaeus reports the following: "Alii (other Carpocratians) vero ex ipsis signant, cauteriantes suos discipulos in posterioribus partibus exstantiae dextrae auris. Unde et Marcellina, qua Romam sub Aniceto venit, cum esset hujus doctrinae, multos exterminavit.

Gnosticos se autem vocant: etiam imagines, quasdam quidem depictas, quasdam autem et de reliqua materia fabricatas habent, dicentes formam Christi factam a Pilato, illo in tempore quo fuit Jesus cum hominibus. Et has coronant, et proponunt eas cum imaginibus mundi philosophorum, videlicet cum imagine Pythagorae, et Platonis, et Aristotelis, et reliquorum; et reliquam observationem circa eas similiter ut gentes faciunt." *Sancti Irenaei, Libros quinque adversus Haereses* (ed. W.W. Harvey), Cambridge, 1857, 210.

According to Irenaeus' own testimony, *adv.Haer* 1/22 (Harvey, 213), Carpocrates, like Cerinthus and the Ebionites, was a Judaizer; he used only the *Gospel of Matthew* and he rejected Paul as "apostata cum legis". Irenaeus could have known about Carpocrates, his doctrine, and the sect which had gathered around him from Marcellina, who according to his report was in Rome during the episcopate of Anicetus (A.D. 155-166). It has been suggested that Irenaeus accompanied Polycarp on the latter's visit to Anicetus ca. A.D. 155; this is possible but cannot be proved with certainty. In *adv. Haer* 1/20/3, Irenaeus mentions Carpocratian "conscriptiones" and thus it is at least as reasonable to imagine that Irenaeus had before him written sources from which he derived his information about Carpocrates and Carpocratians; cf. A. von Harnack, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur bis Eusebius I/1*, Leipzig, 1958, 161, 162. He personally could have known Carpocratians in Rome and could have witnessed their syncretistic cult there; again this cannot be proved. It is unlikely, however, that Irenaeus personally knew Carpocrates and his precocious son Epiphanes, who according to tradition as reported by Clement, *Stromata* 3/2/5-10 (gives three quotations from Epiphanes' περὶ δικαιοσύνης) lived on Same (Cephalonia) with his mother Alexandreia. Epiphanes' literary prodigies were supposedly composed on Same until his seventeenth year when he died; he was honored by the islanders as a god and at his untimely death they built and consecrated a temple to his memory, where according to Clement's report they gathered at the new moon for sacrifices, libations, and hymns sung in his honor. The father, Carpocrates, is associated by tradition with Alexandria. We have virtually no positive evidence concerning Irenaeus' early years; he could have visited lower Egypt or the eastern off-shore islands of the Ionian sea, but we know nothing of this. From the meagre biographical evidence that is preserved, it is reasonable to assume that Irenaeus knew about the Carpocratians from a written source.

The Carpocratians, as Irenaeus describes them, were superstitious (religious?) syncretists. They marked their bodies; they called themselves Gnostics, perhaps to distinguish themselves from their contemporaries (cf. F. Sagnard, La Gnose Valentinienne..., Paris, 1947, 81/n.1.); they possessed images (whose iconography Irenaeus does not disclose); and they covered these images, some of which were painted and some of which were made of other materials, with crowns, wreathes, and garlands; cf. Acta Joannis in Neutestamentliche Apokryphen 2 (ed. E. Hennecke), Tübingen, 1964, 147. The best-known example of syncretism roughly contemporary with the oldest surviving Christian art is the description, of very questionable authenticity, of Alexander Severus' lararium majus which is said to have contained images of Christ, Abraham, Orpheus, Apollonius of Tyana and Alexander the Great; cf. The Scriptores Historiae Augustae 2 (ed. D. Magie), N.Y. 1924, 235, 241, also the article, "Syncretismus" by K. Latte in RGG 5, 952-959 (2nd. ed.). An important example of a syncretistic funerary site is the recently discovered catacomb in the via Latina (occupied between ca. A.D. 300 and 410); cf. A. Ferrua, Le pitture della nuova catacomba di via Latina, Città del Vaticano, 1960. Irenaeus tells us that the Carpocratians put the above mentioned images, together with the images of "worldly philosophers" (sic!) Pythagoras Plato, and Aristotle, and "the rest", in prominent places, presumably for purposes of worship and veneration. They had another way of reverencing these images which they carried out, according to Irenaeus, "in the manner of pagans." According to the Carpocratians, an image of Christ had been made by Pilate (but they did not claim to have this image in their possession, contra Koch, Elliger, et. al.).

Irenaeus may be simply transmitting cultic practices which were described in his source (which drew upon Pilate tradition) or he may be describing Gnostic cultic practices that he personally had witnessed; it is also possible that he is imputing practices to his adversaries which he had never witnessed and which were not present in his source. In cataloguing Gnostic vices he describes Basilides and his followers in a similar manner;

adv. Haer. 1/19/3 (Harvey, 201) and concerning the followers of Simon, adv. Haer. 1/16/3 (Harvey, 194). After all, as we have seen in the literature of Christian apology, at the time when Irenaeus was writing the literary topos against images was a widely used and popular apologetic device. According to its dictates the cultic use of images was a priori proof of degeneracy and depravity. Many of the practices which Irenaeus imputes to the Gnostics have a similar character, this is especially true of cultic actions. The cultic actions practiced by the followers of Marcus the Roman magician, adv. Haer. 1/7/2 ff. (Harvey, 115ff.) have a very close parallel, according to G. MacRae, to non-sacramental acts described in the unpublished First Apocalypse of James, from Nag Hammadi. MacRae asks whether there was any true cultic "actio" in Gnosticism or whether instead the cultic actions described variously in Gnostic literature are in fact literary fictions. The description of the Marcosian sacraments, the sacraments in the Gospel of Philip, and in the Excerpta ex Theodoto may have had their original "Sitz im Leben" in the non-sacramental recitation of the salvation myth. In any event, Irenaeus' description of Carpocratian cult, with its panoply of images, needs to be reconsidered in the light of what is known elsewhere about Gnostic cult and Gnostic sacramentalism. I wish to express my thanks to Professor MacRae for discussing this subject with me.

In addition to the evidence provided by Irenaeus, there survives a small corpus of monuments which date from the second and third centuries and which have been identified as the product of historical Gnosticism. These monuments are normally adduced in support of the theory that iconophilic Gnostics had a direct influence on orthodox Christians in the matter of images and image-making.

Apart from this theory which, as we shall see, cannot be verified archaeologically, the matter of identifying the material culture associated with Gnosticism in antiquity is an important subject and deserves perhaps more attention than it has received in recent years. Gnosticism was an important and relatively pervasive religious movement in the pre-Constantinian period; in fact one historian has called Gnosticism a "world religion" (G. Quispel, Gnosis als Weltreligion, Zürich, 1951. Since the discovery in

1945 or 1946 of the library of Coptic Gnostic codices at Nag Hammadi, the study of Gnosticism has been immeasurably enriched. Gnostic belief and teaching can now be studied in detail; this was possible in a far more limited degree prior to the discovery of the Nag Hammadi codices because formerly we were largely dependent on information provided by the orthodox heresiologists, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Epiphanius, and the Nestorian Christian, Theodore bar Koni. But despite the importance of Gnosticism perhaps even as a "world religion", and even despite the extensive written documentation provided by the Nag Hammadi codices, we know remarkably little about the historical progress of Gnosticism. The historical origins of Gnosticism is a subject that is bristling with critical difficulties and a subject on which there is more than a little disagreement, e.g., U. Bianchi, ed., Le origini dello Gnosticismo (Colloquio di Messina, 13-18 Aprile, 1966), Leiden, 1967. The social, economic, and political circumstances which attended Gnosticism are conjectural; little is known of the lives of individual Gnostics. There is general agreement that a social history of Gnosticism is a desideratum, however, the process of acquiring the necessary information on which such a narrative history would be based is unclear; cf. T.P. van Baaren, "Towards a definition of Gnosticism", Le origini..., 174-180; E. Mendelson, "Some Notes on a Sociological Analysis of Gnosticism", Le origini..., 668-775; G. MacRae, "Gnosis in Messina", CBQ 28, 1966, 322-333.

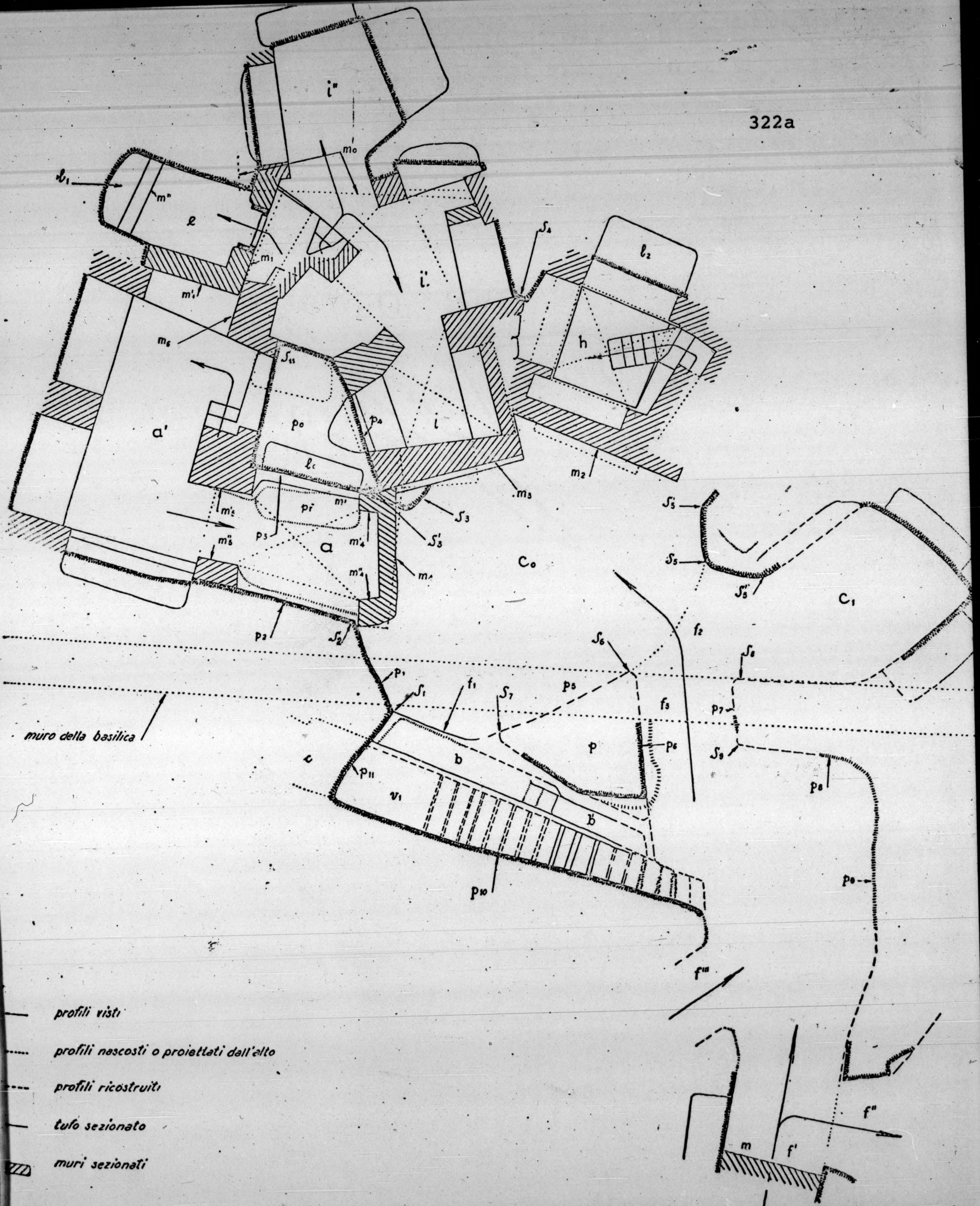
One method of acquiring information about Gnosticism that has not yet been fully exploited is archaeology. Nag Hammadi is the obvious place to begin; in fact an excavation there was planned for the summer of 1970 but was cancelled pursuant to the sudden death of the excavation's director, Paul Lapp. The circumstances of the discovery of the Coptic Gnostic library at Nag Hammadi are by no means clear. The find spot (the necropolis of Hamra-Dom?) is disputed; Jean Doresse is reported to have kept a notebook reporting topographical and other archaeological information relative to the discovery of the codices. What happened to this notebook appears to be generally unknown. Hopefully more work will be done to clarify the material circumstances associated with the Nag Hammadi library.

Numerous figured artifacts have been associated with historical Gnosticism. Gems and amulets and talismans are the best known of these sources, but we must disregard them here because there is no established chronology for these objects and hence their usefulness as historical sources is problematic; cf. C. Bonner, Studies in Magical Amulets chiefly Graeco-Egyptian, Ann Arbor, 1950 (there the older literature). A. von Harnack, op.cit. I/1, 161, noted correctly that many of the gems in question reflect a Gnostic influence, such as those with the name Abrasax which derive untimately from Basilidian circles, but many of these gems are products of the late Empire (4th, 5th, and 6th centuries) and hence their deriviation from Gnosticism is probably very indirect. It would be more to the point to view these gems as part of the general trend toward magic which flourished at all levels of society from Constantine to Justinian and beyond; cf. J. Bidex, Les mages hellénisés, Paris, 1938, and M.A. Kugener, ed., Vie de Sévère par Zacharie le Scholastique, Patrologia Orientalis 2/1, Paris, 1907, 1-115.

Also to be consulted as a possibly Gnostic (Ophite), third century artifact is an alabaster bowl containing a magical inscription and pictorial imagery, published by H. Leisegang, "Das Mysterium der Schlange. Ein Beitrag zur Erforschung des griechischen Mysterienkults und seines Fortlebens in der christlichen Welt", EJb 7, 1939, 151-250. A few additional objects, possibly of Gnostic origin, are discussed in J. Doresse, Les livres secrets des Gnostiques d'Egypt, Paris, 1958, 96-102.

By far the most comprehensive study of monuments which are thought to be linked with Gnosticism or with other heterodox/schismatic factions is C. Cecchelli's, Monumenti Cristiano-Eretici di Roma, Rome, 1944. Cecchelli's identification of heterdox-schismatic epigraphy needs correction in the light of A. Ferrua, "Questioni di epigrafia eretica romana", RivAC 21, 1944/1945, 165-221, and by the same author, "I monumenti eretici di Roma", CivC 95/2, 1944, 388-392.

The first of the two above-mentioned major monuments which has been identified variously with Gnosticism and with other forms of sectarianism, and heterodox-schismatic Christianity is the tomb of the Hermete (plan: tomb h) discovered in 1919 under the church of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p10
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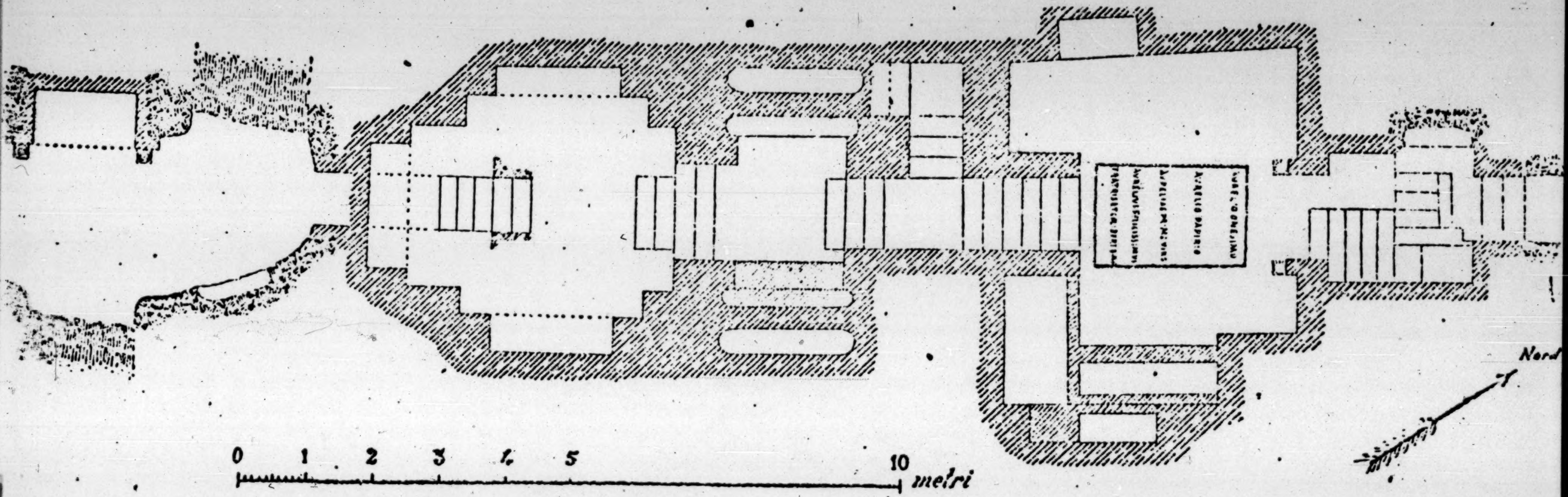
profili visti
profili nascosti o proiettati dall'alto
profili ricostruiti
tufo sezionato
muri sezionati

(Plan: F. Tolotti, Memorie degli Apostoli in Catacumbas, (Collezione "Amici delle Catacombe,"XIX), Città del Vaticano, 1953, Tav. III.)

San Sebastiano; cf. G. Mancini, "Scavi sotto la basilica di S. Sebastiano", NSc 5/20, 1923 3ff.; F. Tolotti, Memorie degli Apostoli "in Catacumbas", ..., Città del Vaticano, 1953; R. Krautheimer, S. Corbett. W. Frankl, Corpus Basilicarum Christianarum Romae 4, Città del Vaticano, 1970, 99 (there the complete literature). The tomb of the Hermete (M. Clodius Hermes and dependents) was discovered in an area south of a street of pagan mausolea (columbaria) which ran under the original Basilica Apostolorum. The tomb of the Hermete was constructed as the first of three successive Roman mausolea all of them rather lavish in details and all of them constructed during the first half of the second century. The tomb of the Hermete, together with the adjacent tomb of the Innocenti (plan: tomb i) and the tomb of the Ascia, or Axe (plan: tomb a) are situated on the northeastern edge of a small plaza, called the piazzuola (plan: Co); originally the piazzuola had been a pozzulano quarry. The inscription of Marcus Ulpius Calocerus (A.D. 97-118) contained in gallery f' provides the terminus a quo for the occupation of the piazzuola as a funerary site; the last burials were in the tomb of the Innocenti, A.D. 238-244; cf. G. Mancini, op.cit., 61-71 and A.M. Schneider, "Die Memoria Apostolorum an der Via Appia", NrGött 3, 1951, 12. The piazzuola with its three mausolea was completely filled in toward the middle of the third century in order to create a courtyard above which would accommodate the cult of the Apostles, Peter and Paul. F. Tolotti, op.cit., 73ff., argued that Christians were present at this site prior to the conversion of the quarry into a funerary plaza in the late first or early second century. Tolotti regarded the stairway (plan: P/10) which descends to an underwater landing (plan: V/1) as a primitive Christian baptismal installation; this point cannot be proved or disproved from the archaeological remains.

The reason for associating the tomb of the Hermete with Gnosticism or some other form of heterodox Christianity concerns the iconography of the paintings contained both on the outside and on the inside of the tomb. Those on the exterior are contained on the attic which was built at the same time as the mausoleum itselt; cf. Tolotti, op.cit., 123ff. The iconography of the paintings on the attic includes, in the center directly over the tympanum of the entrance doorway, a group of standing figures (their number and significance is unclear); cf. Mancini, *op.cit.*, Tav. 10/1. To the left of center is a group of sheep and goats; above them is a *criophoros* figure and to the left of the *criophoros* are two figures both moving toward the latter, one of them with outstretched arms; cf. the appendix by A. von Gerkan, "Die christlichen Anlagen unter San Sebastiano" in H. Leitzmann, *Petrus und Paulus in Rom*, Berlin, 1927 (2nd ed.), 254, Taf. II. To the right of center is a series of meal scenes; in each, figures are gathered at a sigma with bread and large drinking vessel (Dölger, *IXΘYC* 5, 513, suggests a "Weinkrater"). Above to the right are three or four standing figures and below to the right center are standing figures moving apparently to the left and possibly carrying baskets of bread; Mancini, *op.cit.*, 53, suggested "una teoria di inservienti, portanti sulle spalle ciascuno un cesto vimineo colmo di pani". On the east wall of the attic, swine are seen moving directly downwards as if in vertical movement; one swine stands upright in the upper right corner. To the left center is a standing human figure facing away from the swine with arms outstretched holding an unidentified object; cf. Mancini, *op.cit.*, Tav. X/2, 53: "il sinistro e disteso e sembra con la mano reggere un bastone". The association of this scene with *Mt.* 8/28ff. has been suggested. On the interior of the tomb are painted traditional decorative motifs, birds, fruits, garlands and vines, vases, a decorative head, possibly Medusa, and three scenes, each of them enclosed within a medallion. In one a human figure holds a rod in his right hand, his arm outstretched, and stands above a crowd of stick-like figures; cf. Mancini, *op.cit.*, Tav. XIV/1, and A. Toynbee, ed., *The Crucible of Christianity*, London, 1969, 184, illus. 22. Another scene shows a group of similar stick-like figures gathered around an object which may be a bier; cf. Mancini, *op.cit.*, Tav. XIV/2. I can see nothing in these paintings which suggests either a Gnostic influence or a heterodox-schismatic influence. If the paintings on the attic have anything to do with Christianity (which is impossible to prove or disprove without further archaeological evidence of a Christian occupation of the site prior to the construction of the Triclia; cf. Mancini *op.cit.*, 47ff. and JMC. Toynbee, J.B. Ward-Perkins, *The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations*, London, 1956, 191/n.59,61.) then they should probably be called a combination of proto-Christian and Biblical iconography.

The paintings on the interior of the tomb are traditional to pagan funerary iconography; the figure who appears to rise above the crowd of stick-like figures is probably an apotheosis type. Christians were not unfamiliar with this iconographic motif as is evident from Christian sarcophagi which often incorporate an imago clipeata as the central element of the frieze.



Monumento degli Aureli al Viale Manzoni.
Sezione longitudinale e Planimetria.

(from G. Bendinelli, "Il monumento sepolcrale degli Aureli al viale Manzoni in Roma", MonAnt 28/2, Rome, 1923, Tav. I.)

But the most important major monument which has been connected with historical Gnosticism is the so-called Hypogaeum of the Aurelii, in the viale Manzoni (the ancient via Labicana) in the region of the Esquiline, about three hundred meters west of the now famous subterranean basilica of Porta Maggiore, on which cf. E. Nash, Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome, N.Y., 1968 (2nd. ed.), 169 (there the complete literature). The tomb of the Aurelii was uncovered in November 1919, and the final report of the excavation was issued four years later cf. G. Bendinelli, "Il monumento sepolcrale degli Aurelii al viale Manzoni in Roma", *MonAnt* 28/2a, 1923, Rome, cols. 290-519; also important are G. Wilpert, "Le pitture del'Ipogeo di Aurelio Felicissimo presso il viale Manzoni in Roma", *PARA* Serie 3, I/2 (Miscellanea G.B. de Rossi), 1924, 1-43, and J. Carcopino, *De Pythagore aux Apôtres*, Paris, 1956.

The tomb consists of two major cubicula joined by an intermediary vestibule and stairs; these elements are arranged in sequence on a northeast axis. The north chamber is nearly square (4.93m. X 4.43m.). The name of the hypogaeum is determined by the inscription written in black tesserae against a background of white tesserae and contained within a rectangle (2.70m. X 1.75m.) in the middle of the floor of the north chamber: Aurelio Onesimo/Aurelio Papirio/Aureliae Prime Virg(ini) Aurelius Felicissimus Fratris et Colibert(is) b(ene) m(erentibus) f(ecit). The hypogaeum may have been designed for a family or, perhaps more likely, for a religious fellowship (fraternity); cf. J.M.C. Toynbee, *Gnomon* 29, 1957, 261-270. There is general agreement that the tomb dates from the early third century. Originally the tomb was on two levels; the upper level consisted of one room (2.65m. X 3.51m) which was placed above the main south chamber. The burials in the so-called "cubicolo superiore" were inhumations, as they were throughout the hypogaeum (although in unpublished travel notes, recorded 1953, E. Kitzinger reports niches in the vestibule which he believes must have held funerary urns). The paintings in the "cubicolo superiore" are mostly lost. Two symmetrical arcosolium burials are contained on the lower register of the west and east walls and a loculus burial was cut into the north wall after these *arcosolia*. The extrados of both the north and south *arcosolia* are decorated with classicistic iconography, bearded philosophers and classical colonnades; cf. Bendinelli, *art.cit.*, fig. 6-10, and Wilpert, art.cit. Tav. II/A, B.

On the north wall of the "cubicolo superiore" to the left of the loculus grave, is a scene which is surely to be identified as Adam and Eve, both standing, naked, Eve to the right almost totally obliterated, the snake and evidences of a tree to the lower right hand corner. The tree does not separate the two figures as is common in most of the surviving examples of Adam and Eve iconography. At Dura, for instance, Adam and Eve are shown picking the fruit *and* covering their genitals, that is, the act of sinning and its consequence are telescoped. The snake at Dura appears in the foreground on its belly, after the curse, *Genesis* 3/14. In the representation of the "cubicolo superiore" the snake and the tree (if there is a tree) are off to the right. Wilpert, *art.cit.*, 32, gives a reconstruction drawing that shows the snake rising from the ground; the same interpretation appears in the plate (reconstructed as always by Carlo Tabinelli), *art.cit.*, Tav. 1. Wilpert, *art.cit.*, 10, sees in this scene a representation of an Ophite revelation discourse: "Il rettile si è alzato dalla terra ed ha la testa rivolta in su verso Eva; non le offre però il pomo fatale, ma dalla bocca vibra la lingue bifida per indicare che è rappresentato parlante". But most later Western iconography shows the snake rising from the ground; cf. J. Fleming, *Die Ikonographie von Adam und Eva in der Kunst vom 3. bis zum 13. Jhdt.*, Univ. of Jena, unpubl. doctoral diss., Jena, 1953, and a fascinating parallel possibly derived from Jewish book illumination, K. Weitzmann, "Die Illustration der Septuaginta" *Münchner Jb. der bildenden Kunst 3/4*, 1952/1953, 119, 120. On the possible iconographic derivation of Adam and Eve from Jason and Medea, cf. H. Leclercq, "Arbres", *DACL* 1/2, col. 2705. The one representation of Adam and Eve which probably does reflect a Gnostic influence (unlike this representation in the "cubicolo superiore") is the well-known Adam/Zoe scene on the ceiling of the chapel at El Bagawat; on which, cf. H. Stern, *CA* 11, 1960, 107ff. (there the older literature).

The central staircase admits to the lower level of the hypogaeum (5.20m. below the upper chamber) and gives access to the two major cubicula; the one to the north, as mentioned, contains the dedicatory inscription, together with a rich complement of wall paintings. These have been described in detail by Bendinelli and I will only refresh the reader's memory by recalling their subject matter. The lower register of the room on the north, east and west walls contain a portrait gallery of eleven unidentified standing male figures, dressed in *tunica manicata* with red clavi and *pallium.* A twelfth figure may have belonged to the original group and was perhaps destroyed when the brick doorway was inserted into the north wall to give access to further burial space to the north of the original nucleus. The figures are sometimes identified as the Apostles, not unreasonably. On the upper register of the north wall a bearded seated figure is shown dressed in *tunica manicata* and *pallium* holding an opened scroll with both hands. In front and below him are sheep. The upper register of the west wall shows an adventus scene; a rider moves rapidly toward a group of men who stand at the gate of a city (Rome? Porta Flamina?). The lunette over the doorway on the north wall contains the representation of a walled city to the left with a colonnaded quadriporticus. Many figures are gathered around a central teacher within this enclosure. On the right side of the lunette is an enclosed garden which appears to be linked by a path with the city to the left. On the upper register of the east wall a banquet is portrayed and below on the lunette of the arcosolium burial, Ulysses is shown upon his return to Ithaca. The ceiling of the chamber contains the image of the shepherd-criophoros four times, in each instance within a roundel.

As one moves from the north chamber to the south the most important decoration within the vestibule on this lower level is the figure of a woman pointing to a Latin cross; cf. E. Dinkler, "Kreuzzeichen und Kreuz. Tav., Chi, Stauros", JbAC 5, 1967, 107. The southern cubiculum (3.31m. X 4.62m.) is barrel vaulted like the chamber to the north. The south, west and east walls contain superimposed arcosolium burials with emplacements for sarcophagi; along the walls are secondary forma burials. The central medallion of the ceiling shows a female, head covered and veiled, dressed in tunica manicata, flanked on the left by a standing bearded figure carrying a scroll, and on the right by a bearded figure with virgula in hand which extends over the head of the female (initiate? deceased?). There is a wealth of iconographic detail in this room, but the most important representations appear to have been the images of men and women standing in row; these accompany the upper arcosolium burials.

J. Carcopino, op.cit., passim, is surely on the right track in identifying the iconography here as predominantly religio-philosophical in character. But which religious philosophy, and how does this philosophy relate to Gnosticism? Carcopino, who regards Gnosticism as development out of Hellenistic philosophy, sees evidence of neo-Pythagoreanism in the iconography contained within the tomb of the Aurelii. As is well-known the historical reconstruction of neo-Pythagoreanism is notoriously difficult; cf. H. Thesleff, An Introduction to Pythagorean Writings of the Hellenistic Period, Åbo, 1961 (Acta Academiae Aboensis Humaniora 24/3.). But even more difficult to prove is the relationship between Gnosticism and Neo-Pythagoreanism; cf. H.J.W. Drijvers, "The Origins of Gnosticism as a Religious and Historical Problem", NTT 22, 1968, 345-346, and J.M.C. Toynbee's review of Carcopino's op.cit., Gnomon 29, 1957, 261-270. Like all of Carcopino's work, his study of the tomb of the Aurelii is ingenious and immensely erudite. It should be said however that here, as in his earlier study of the "neo-Pythagorean" basilica at Porta Maggiore, i.e., Études Romaines, La Basilique Pythagoricienne de la Porta Majeure, Paris, 1926, Carcopino shows a special facility for elevating his own ingenious theories into facts. The point is, of course, obvious: the neo-Pythagorean character of the tomb of the Aurelii is possible but unproven, and the putative relationship between historical Gnosticism and neo-Pythagoreanism is a relationship that is impossible to test due to the very fragmentary survival of the sources.

As was noted above, it is possible that Gnostics made figured artifacts illustrative of their own special beliefs in the second and third centuries. It is even possible that certain Gnostics in the late second or early third centuries influenced orthodox Christians in the matter of image-making; this, however, presupposes a picture of orthodox-heterodox relations which presents numerous difficulties, as defined by Walter Bauer. The term, "Gnostic art" does not really add to our understanding of Gnosticism or of art. Until new evidence comes to light, evidence which would permit us to isolate a corpus of monuments and identify them as Gnostically inspired, then it probably best to drop the term altogether. As it is presently used, it contributes little more than confusion and is used moreover to encourage the problematic iconophobic theory of the origins and beginning of early Christian art.

APPENDIX IV

The Chronology of the oldest surviving Christian painting.

There is little or no agreement about the chronology of the oldest surviving Christian painting. A striking example of the lack of scholarly agreement on this subject was provided as recently as the Seventh International Congress of Christian Archaeology held in September 1965 in Trier. At that Congress J. Kollwitz presented an important survey of the state of the study of Constantinian painting ("Die Malerei der konstantinischen Zeit", *AttiVII.CIAC*, 29-158) and, at the same Congress H.G. Thümmel proposed still another new chronology for the beginning of early Christian art ("Die Anfänge der Katakombenmalerei", *AttiVII.CIAC*, 745-752). Thümmel's study, like that of J. de Wit, *Spatrömische Bildnismalerei*, Berlin, 1938, is based on analogies (sic!) drawn from the history of pre-Constantinian Christian sculpture. Thümmel's conclusion was that the oldest surviving paintings could not date much before ca. A.D. 300; but Thümmel's method (and *mutatis mutandis* his conclusions) amounts to a council of despair.

An important point of method needs emphasis: if the historian seeks to develop stylistic and compositional criteria in dating the oldest surviving Christian painting, then he must look first and primarily to the comparative evidence provided by the history of Romano-Campanian painting. Analogies drawn from the sculpture of the period are bound to be vulnerable on more than one point, first because painting and sculpture are two different media, but perhaps more importantly because the Christian painting of the early third century was conceived and executed under strikingly different circumstances and with a very different purse as its support than was the Christian sculpture of the same period. The persons who executed the paintings in the oldest catacomb nucleii were not master craftsmen; moreover their working circumstances which involved most importantly poor lighting were poor by comparison with the workshop conditions which prevailed above ground in the sculptor's atelier. The latter was better trained and more skilled to begin with; his product was also vastly more expensive than the subterranean burials which were dug out of Rome's tufa by the hundreds. Stylistic and compositional analogies drawn from the oldest surviving Christian sculpture and applied to the Christian painting of the early third century are bound to misrepresent the real sequence of the paintings and end up, like Thümmel's article in one or another absurdity. I repeat, if stylistic and compositional criteria are to be introduced, then the oldest surviving Christian paintings should be assessed primarily in the light of other paintings.

Prior to Paul Styger's work on the Roman catacombs, the chronology of pre-Constantinian Christian wall painting was largely derived from evidences provided by inscriptions, coins, and brick stamps. De Rossi used inscriptions liberally in order to determine the chronology of wall paintings; probably the most telling single criticism of his method is A.M. Schneider's historical reconstruction of the entrance gate to the Hypogaeum Flaviorum: inscriptions are reliable in determining dates only if they are discovered in situ. This is archaeological orthodoxy today. On the use of coins and brick stamps (many of which are used and reused), cf. P. Styger, RK, 12, 13, and H. Bloch, I bolli laterizi e la storia edilizia romana, Roma, 1938-1939. 25. F. Wirth's attempt to establish a chronology of painting on basis of brick sizes used in wall construction may be cited here as an example of the failure which attends most similar undertakings; cf. his Römische Wandmalerei, Berlin, 1934.

Styger's work was a breakthrough in the history of Christian archaeology. Although he has had his numerous detractors, Styger fought to introduce methods of stratigraphic archaeology in a field where any attempt to alter the chronology was regarded as tantamount to heresy. Styger's methods and his theories of the structural evolution of Roma sotterranea were expounded in a polemical atmosphere, and hence many of his judgments tended to be apodictic and irrational. Since his opposition, i.e., Wilpert, was hardly inclined to be convinced by a reasoned demonstration of the archaeological truth, presented empirically and inductively, Styger's own inclination to arbitrary judgments becomes somewhat more understandable.

Styger believed that there was a method to the apparent madness of Rome's miles of underground confusion. He believed that the fossors had dug at a more or less fixed rate (the height of an average tunnel: approximately 2m.) and they had dug downwards, hence the lowest levels were the most recently dug.

Styger also believed that one could identify the oldest subterranean nucleii by their grill-like pattern of tunnerls, i.e., two roughly parallel main tunnels connected by an indefinite number of transverse shorter tunnels. These subterranean grill patterns conform in outline, thought Styger, to small plots of land on the surface of the earth which had belonged to private parties and had come into the church's ownership. Styger's theory as noted, was formulated (cf. RK 1-13) against stiff opposition and necessarily reflect an atmosphere of polemics and irrationality. But his principles were sound and his contribution to the study of early Christian archaeology has proved to be lasting. In his Le Catacombe e gli antichi cimiteri Cristiani in Roma, Bologna, 1966, 49ff. P Testini refers to Styger as an example of the ideological rigidity and blindness and speaks of the "prezunzione infondata" upon which his theory is built. But this is misleading; Styger's theory of the structural evolution of Roma sotterranea is not built on mere theories; at least in broad outline his theory of stratigraphic levels and sequences has been verified many times over. Testinis' own neo-Wilpertian principles are not beyond reproach.

Other methods of dating the oldest surviving Christian funerary painting have been less successful. I have already mentioned that stylistic criteria, if adduced, must draw upon relevant comparative evidence. It should be noted in that context that the study of wall painting in antiquity is concerned with an entire system of decorating walls and ceilings, and hence the compositional frame elements are very important in determining the date and filiation of a given monument. P. Markthaler's "Die dekorativen Konstruktionen der Katakombendecken Roms" RQ 35, 1927, 53-111 should be mentioned here; although he focussed only on ceiling composition and although he reflects the older pre-Styger (in accurate) chronological presumptions of de Rossi and Wilpert. Markthaler's approach was basically sound. He recognized the need for studying the overall arrangement of the painted surfaces in question and not just individual motifs within that surface.

The study of materials and construction techniques, paints pigments, thickness and application of plaster has led to inconclusive results. D. Winfield "Middle and late Byzantine Wall Painting Methods" DOP 22, 1968, 63ff. (Table I) has conveniently summarized what is known about the technical composition of catacomb painting; it is not very much. Catacomb painting is not a tradition which involved master craftsmen; judged by the comparative history of wall painting, the compositions in the catacombs are relatively low in quality. Similarly, the application of plaster tends to be uneven and crudely executed and does not lead to positive results in the effort to detect the hand of the craftsman or the sequence of the paintings.

The study of pre-Constantinian iconography as a criterion for establishing a chronology is also largely fruitless. We are not certain at present how and where and under what historical impulse Christian painting first began. Until more critical work has been done in the area of proto-Christian imagery, that is, until we have a more positive idea about the emergence of Christian iconography from its pagan origins, then arguments/~~from~~ ~~its pagan origins, then arguments~~/from iconography will continue to be largely subjective, circular and unreliable as a method for establishing chronological certainties.

There are a number of relevant areas of study which deserve mention in this discussion of pre-Constantinian Christian painting. Mummy portraits do not figure in the present study because none of these objects has ever been clearly identified as Christian for the period which concerns us here. H. Zaloscer, *Porträts aus dem Wüstensand. Die antiken Mumienbildnisse aus der Oase Fayum*, Munich, 1961, has argued that the entire genre of late Ptolemaic and Greco-Roman mummy portraiture was the invention of Jewish Christians living in the Fayum. This interpretation has been correctly rejected because of the absence of identifying criteria whereby one might detect their so-called Jewish Christian origins' cf. A. Hermann; *JbAC* 5, 1962, 70ff., and K. Parlasca, *Mumien porträts und ver Wandte Denkmäler*, Wiesbaden, 1966, ^{15}, 206-212. One of the earliest Christian monuments of lower Egypt is probably the child's clay sarcophagus in the British Museum; cf. Parlasca *op.cit.*, 209 Taf. I/6. It takes us nowhere, however, in terms of chronology.

Also related to early Christian painting is the art of mosaics, an art form in which Christians excelled and achieved perhaps the finest flowering of their pictorial imagination. But there are no surviving Christian mosaics which we can date to the period prior to the Tetrarchy. The oldest Christian mosaic known to us is contained on the vault of tomb M in the Vatican necropolis; cf. J.M.C. Toynbee and J.B. Ward-Perkins The Shrine of St. Peters, London, 1956, 72-74, 116-117 (there the older literature).

And lastly, there are gilded vessels which are related in medium, especially those in the fine brush technique, to painting. Again however we can say nothing positive about the chronology of these monuments; Morey had undertaken to provide the chronological outline of these beautiful objects, but his work was never brought to completion.

The time is ripe for a new and intensive study of the origins and development of early Christian painting, a study which would replace F. Wirth's valuable but now largely obsolete history of Roman wall painting.

Certain points need to be observed as guidelines.

1. If anything at all is known about the structural history of the place in which a given painting appears, then this information must be consulted as the first criterion in establishing a chronology of wall paintings.

2. A serious effort must be made to integrate the history of early Christian wall painting into the general history of Romano-Campanian painting in the early and middle Empire. This is not so hopeless a task as it once appeared to be.

3. Paintings of the type which appear in the corpus of early Christian monuments must be considered primarily by comparison with other painting. Analogies drawn from sculpture are largely irrelevant.

4. Early Christian wall painting must be seen as a complete decorative system. The former practice of gouging individual pictures and isolated motifs out of wall surfaces and placing these fragments in museums is a practice which thankfully has been abandoned. This came about largely through the recognition that Romano-Campanian wall painting in particular (but antique

> wall painting in general) created a complete decorative system which normally covered all the available wall space and most of the ceiling space. No element within this decorative scheme can be properly understood apart from its place within the whole.

Regarding point no. 2, a further word is appropriate. The study of early Christian archaeology has suffered for generations from isolationism. This is especially noticeable in the general study of early Christian painting and in the particular effort to establish its correct chronology. No one has set this painting in its proper context, i.e., within the general history of Romano-Campanian painting. Any effort to do so must begin with the paintings preserved along the Bay of Naples at Herculaneum,Pompeii,and Boscoreale and must consult in that regard Beyen's chronology as the proper point of departure; cf. H. Beyen Die Pompejanische Wanddekoration von Zweiten bis zum vierten Stil. In addition to Beyen's chronology which provides the proper point of departure, the continuation of the tradition of Ostia becomes an item of central importance in defining the immediate antecedents of the paintings in Roman and Sicilian funeral places. The wall decorations in the House of the Muses and in the Cortile dell'Aquila, described alternately by R. Bianchi-Bandinelli as the "tachiste" degeneration and simplification of the Pompeiian fourth style (from the period of the Flavians) and as the simplification of the decoration under Commodus (as represented in Ostia's "Yellow Room") shows unmistakeably the close connection between the oldest surviving Christian wall painting and its Romano Campanian models cf. R. Bianchi-Bandinelli, Rome, The Late Empire, N.Y. 1971, 86ff (there the older literature). The parallel between the former and the wall decorations contained in the Roman villa (of late second or early third century date) under San Sebastiano are equally convincing.

APPENDIX V

The Chronology of the oldest surviving Christian sculpture.

I suggested above in Appendix I, 290, that the chronological bases of Christian sculpture are "tentative". That statement needs qualification, and beyond that there is very little that needs to be said here about the chronological bases of sculpture in the present study. The chronological bases of this sculpture may be tentative, but there is immeasurably greater certainty in this field than there is in the study of the corresponding painting of the period. In addition, it is important to note that, judged by the standards of chronology appropriate to the study of monuments in antiquity, the chronology of third century Christian sculpture is not exceptionally inaccurate. Even so, the opinions about the chronological classification of Christian monuments differ by twenty to forty years.

As one might expect, the differences of opinion are largely the result of an appeal to different comparative sources. Gerke, following Rodenwaldt, inclines to view the monuments produced in Roman workshops as determinative for the establishment and development of a Christian sculptural tradition in the mid-third century. In support of his chronology, Gerke adduces models among the demythologized pagan hunt sarcophagi of the Severan epoch, the idyllic shepherd sarcophagi from the middle of the century, and philosophy sarcophagi from the so-called Gallienic Renaissance; for a bibliography of G. Rodenwaldt's most important work as background to the study of early Christian sculpture, cf. E. Weigand, "Die spätantike Sarkophagskulptur im Lichte neuerer Forschungen", BZ 41, 1941, 407/n.2. Gerke's major work is, of course, his Die christlichen Sarkophage der vorkonstantinischern Zeit, Berlin, 1940.

Von Schönebeck regards Gerke's dating as too late. The former believes that the oldest surviving Christian sarcophagi (La Gayole, Sta. Maria Antiqua, and Lateran 181 from the via Salaria) should be seen as derivatives of models produced in Asia Minor, especially in ancient Ionia. Von Schonebeck believes that the proper background for the understanding of the funerary symbolism contained on these monuments is the idyllic expression of pagan belief in the after life. He points to bucolic iconography as the basis for the Christian representation of paradise. Von Schönebeck's models date from the early third century; Weigand follows him in dating the oldest surviving examples of Christian funerary sculpture to the period ca. A.D. 220-230. In other words, with a time span of approximately forty years, i.e., A.D. 220 to A.D. 260 (Gerke's terminus a quo) there is agreement in the matter of the chronology of Christian sculpture; cf. H. von Schönebeck, "Die christlichen Paradeisossarkophage", RivAC 14, 1937, 289-343. The reader is referred to Weigand's art.cit., for more detailed discussion.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

1. The limitations of the sources.

We can now summarize briefly the results of the foregoing investigations and propose those conclusions that are justifiable in the light of the sources. The essential documentation has been provided above and will not be rehearsed again in this concluding section. Should matters of unclarity arise in the following discussion, the reader is referred back to the appropriate section in the preceding three chapters, the contents of which are outlined in detail in the Table of Contents.

The purpose of this study has been to reconsider the oldest surviving evidence for Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images. This required first that attention be directed to the nature and the extent of the surviving sources which in any way relate to the subject. In earlier generations confessional concerns dominated the understanding of this subject, and sweeping generalizations were made in the name of both written and archaeological sources. In reality the extent of the relevant surviving sources is not great. The generalizations which were offered by earlier generations of scholars and which were designed to characterize all of early Christianity in the matter of the "Bilderfrage" are generalizations which no longer inspire confidence.

The sources will not support either of the popular extremes. We cannot say that all of Christianity prior to the fourth century was rigoristically iconophobic and aniconic, vigilantly and scrupulously opposed to images and image-making, the true predecessor of rigoristic Calvinism and fanatic Bilderstürmerei. Nor can we propose that all of Christianity during this same period was happily and simply iconophilic, untroubled by the complications which the image presented to Christian belief, easily reconciled to a plurality of images, at home, at work, at prayer. The truth, which lies somewhere in between these two extremes, requires that we distinguish clearly between what is known about this subject on the basis of the surviving sources, and what is inferred from the latter or otherwise surmised on the basis of other criteria.

The major limitation of the written sources relative to our subject concerns the narrow extent of images discussed and the special purposes to which that discussion is subordinated. We do not know what the founder of the new religion thought about images and visual arts; we do not know what Jesus thought, indeed we do not know if Jesus thought about our subject. The conflict paradigm, Mk. 12/13-17, records a tradition which must have been in circulation (possibly in Rome) by the end of the first century. As we have seen, according to this tradition Jesus was not like the rigoristic rabbis in the matter of looking upon the imperial image as portrayed on coinage. But the historical authenticity of this tradition is problematic.

We have seen that in the Christian literature of opposition to Rome the image of the emperor was a subject of central concern. The opposition movement, which we are made aware of mostly through apocalyptic and martyrological literature, disliked the imperial image and what it stood for. This dislike was expressed with varying degrees of intensity, from indifference to open hatred and contempt. Moreover, we have seen that Pliny, who was called upon to adjudicate delations that had been submitted against Christians in Bithynia, discharged the duty of office by submitting the accused to a test of loyalty which required sacrifice to the image of the emperor. Pliny understood that true Christians would not sacrifice. In a word, the imperial image was an offense to the sovereignty of God, or at least was so construed by more than a few Christians, who reacted with open hostility and contempt in the presence of that image.

Images are also discussed in the Christian literature of reconciliation, accommodation, and assimilation, namely Christian apology. Unlike apocalyptic and martyrological literature, Christian apology sought reconciliation and the minimization of conflict. As a part of their general intention to put their best foot foremost, the apologists made every effort to disassociate themselves from what they regarded (and what their readership regarded) to be the religious vulgarities of the day. This included the cult of images. Christian apologists contrasted their own enlighted and philosophical beliefs to those of the superstitious masses, and in so doing, enlisted the use of the venerable *topos* against images. They addressed their apologies to the ultimate political power and hoped by their persuasiveness to win for the new religion a legal franchise, immunity and exemption from its status as *religio illicita*. The discussion of images within Christian apology must be understood correctly as a function of what the apologists hoped to achieve, nothing more and nothing less.

We have seen the testimony at the end of the second century of the humanist turned puritan, Clement of Alexandria. Clement had more than a taste for pagan poetry; and it is inherently probable that he enjoyed painting and sculpture as well. As a Christian and a Platonist, he felt he should renounce his attachment to such ephemera. His expressed policy in the matter of visual images and arts was one of conscientious opposition; he may have liked the visual arts but he was convinced he should not. Clement allowed one concession: Christians could seal their household possessions against theft through the use of finger rings (signet rings) bearing images of a neutral character. Clement mentions images that could have been harmonized with Christian belief and practice, although he himself makes the explicitly symbolic Christian identification of only one of these images.

And lastly, we have heard from Tertullian at length on the subject of images; his position is more complicated than that of any of his predecessors or contemporaries. Tertullian was contentious; he loved to argue and he argued to win. What he thought about images, or what he said he thought about images must be understood, as with any apologist, in the light of what he hoped to achieve; in Tertullian's case this latter was nothing less than the complete and irrevocable defeat and ruin of his opponent. To that end he could be an outspoken rigorist, denouncing and condemning all images and image-making out of hand. And more or less concurrently, he could defend the use of images and express clearly the legitimate and illegitimate uses of visual images. Unlike Clement, Tertullian did not have a consistent attitude in the matter of images. He, together with John the Evangelist, Athenagoras of Athens, and Justin Martyr, anticipated the church's later pictorial representation of the crucifixion in his typological exegesis of Numbers 21/6-9.

We must conclude that the written evidence relative to our subject is limited and specific in character. Almost invariably when the subject of images and visual arts arises, only one category of images is contemplated, namely, images which are judged to be idolatrous, the image of the emperor or the images of the pagan pantheon, both the major and the minor divinities. Christianity, like its parent religion Judaism, did not allow the existence of other gods or other sovereign powers which threatened the uniqueness and final authority of God.[1]

Hence Christianity rejected the validity of images of such gods and sovereigns and did so, it appears, with considerable vigor and outspokenness in more than one region of the Empire.

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[1] E. Peterson, "Der Monotheismus als politisches Problem", Leipzig, 1935, r.p. in Theologische Traktate, Munich, 1951, 45-148.

But what about non-idolatrous images? And what about the visual portrayal of the separate aspects of Christian belief (apart from the belief in God whose visual aspect could not be represented visually) and Christian practice? Did Christians recognize and abide by the distinction between an idolatrous image and a non-idolatrous image? Did they permit the existence of the latter in their homes, in their places of worship, or in their funerary places? In other words, did Christians recognize a distinction between the legitimate and illegitimate uses of visual imagery, or was all visual imagery, regardless of its specific character, condemned and rejected out of hand?

Unfortunately our sources do not answer these questions. For the period prior to A.D. 200, it is at present impossible to reconstruct the internal conditions relative to our subject which prevailed in any given Christian community. We simply do not know what the different communities of Christians thought about this matter, if they thought about it at all, and we do not know what practices they adopted.

One bit of positive evidence does survive, namely Tertullian's description, Pud. 7/1ff., 10/12ff., of the practices of his opponents, the laxist Catholics of

Carthage. Of course Tertullian was writing about his enemies and thus we should be wary of the doctrines and practices which he imputes to them. As is his wont, he will portray them in the worst light possible, all the while exaggerating their endless evils in order to make his point. But unlike Irenaeus' account of the Carpocratians, adv. Haer 1/20/4, Tertullian's objective here is not to expose his opponent's sinfulness by pointing to their vulgar philiconic excesses. To the contrary, Tertullian sets forth the information that they paint images on their cups in a purely straight-forward manner. This information, which is immensely important for our subject, is not at all central to Tertullian's argument; instead it is incidental. If Tertullian were writing here as a convinced rigorist in the matter of images, he would have very likely given his reader some indication of this. The Catholics are wicked, evil people, encouraging drunkenness, adultery, and every other form of depravity by their disgraceful doctrine of "paenitentia secunda"; Tertullian is indifferent to the fact that they paint images of the shepherd-criophoros on their cups. From the context and the manner of presentation it sounds as if Tertullian is reporting the truth, at least in the rather insignificant (from his point of view) detail concerning his opponents' image-making activities.

But for our subject Tertullian's report is a precious piece of information; it tells us that Carthaginian Christians made images ca. A.D. 210-215/220, of the shepherd-criophoros, which they took to be their "pastor bonus Christus", and which they placed on their eucharistic drinking vessels. How long had they been doing this? Were they alone in this practice, or were other Christian communities doing this also?

Unfortunately our source does not take us any farther toward the solution of the questions; we simply do not know. It goes almost without saying that, if the Carthaginian Christians were doing what Tertullian says they were doing, then we have written evidence of at least one early third century group of Christians who had a sufficiently positive attitude toward the legitimate (symbolic) uses of visual imagery to want to make such imagery an integral part of their own religious tradition.

The limitations which the archaeological sources impose upon our subject are unquestionably greater than those of the written sources. In the case of the latter, we know names and dates and places and have some idea of the factions and issues which are represented, e.g., by Christian apology, Christian martyrology, Christian apocalyptic, by Tertullian and Clement. But in the case of the archaeological sources this is emphatically not the case.

Most of the oldest surviving Christian monuments are of Italian provenance, specifically from Rome, and most are funerary in character. The house church at Dura Europos is a noteworthy exception in both respects. There is nothing in the way of figured monuments which we can date and which we can identify as Christian from the other parts of the Empire prior to the third century (with the exception of Jewish Christian artifacts), and in fact most dateable Christian monuments survive only from the Constantinian period and later. In other words archaeology tells us little or nothing about the Christian occupation of most places prior to the fourth century: North Africa, Spain, Gaul, Macedonia and Greece, Asia Minor including Armenia, eastern and western Syria, Palestine, Arabia, and Egypt. In the case of Palestine a word of caution must be introduced; the last word has not been said on the Jewish Christian occupation of Palestine during the first and second centuries of the new religion. It would be precipitous to insist that there are no figured Christian artifacts which survive in Palestine from the period before the third century.

Of the monuments which do survive and which we can date and identify by present methods, we know remarkably little about the circumstances of their fabrication and execution. Most importantly, we do not know who made the paintings in the Roman catacombs or in the Dura house church, and who made (or caused to be made) the Christian sculpture of the early third century. Since we do not know who these image-makers were, we also do not know the content of their beliefs (apart from what we can infer from the monuments themselves) and we do not know how their beliefs compared with those of their Christian contemporaries. In other words to what factions did the image-makers adhere? After all, we have learned not to view primitive Christianity as a monolith; its social, ethnic, economic, and spiritual composition was pluralistic.[2]

We do not know what Christian images and artifacts, were made in most regions of the Empire prior to the fourth century. We have a better idea of the situation in Italy, especially Rome, for the third century. Still, the people who made the oldest surviving monuments remain anonymous. But even more perplexing is the archaeological question of what Christians did in the matter of images and artifacts prior to the third century. Here we draw an absolute blank. Did Christians make artifacts which were stamped with a distinct (or indistinct) Christian iconography prior to the third century? If so where are these artifacts? Have they all perished? On the face of it, it seems unlikely that such monuments would have been so completely destroyed that not a trace of them would survive from the period prior to the third century. Once again, we are faced with the perplexing question of the beginning and origins of early Christian image-making. This question must be seen within the overall investigation of early Christian art and archaeology and it is to this that we now turn as the conclusion of this study.

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[2] W. Bauer, Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei im ältesten Christentum, Tübingen, 1934, 1964.

2. Presumptive change?

The theory which underlies most of the contemporary critical scholarship that touches in any way upon our subject is the theory of presumptive change. It is presumptive because it is unproved; I believe that it is also largely unprovable. No one, to my knowledge, has ever stated fully and clearly the theory of presumptive change, but numerous scholars have contributed to the definition of one or another of its aspects. Koch's monograph is the "pièce de resistance" to which advocates of this theory invariably point. Although no one has ever stated the theory in full, numbers of students of early Christianity and later Byzantine history share one of more of its premises. Since it is a theory which looms large in our contemporary understanding of the early Christian "Bilderfrage" and since more than one of its premises is problematic, it will be useful to look at this theory in greater detail here. Concisely stated, the theory of presumptive change runs as follows.

Christianity prior to the third century was in theory iconophobic and in practice aniconic. Christians came by their aversion to all forms of visual imagery naturally. Christianity was the child of Judaism, was in other words the spiritual heir of a religious tradition which was essentially and radically opposed to all images and image-making. In its pure and essential form (apostolic Christianity and the historical Jesus) Christianity is an aniconic religion. Originally Christianity was an imageless religion. Christians did not make images relative to their own new set of beliefs and practices. And they did not adapt to their own purposes any of the already extant (whether Jewish or pagan) images that were available to them in their environs.

Christian homes, Christian places of worship, and Christian funerary monuments were bare and devoid of any and all visual imagery. Christian literature from the period prior to the third century corroborates this view. Written sources that touch upon the subject, even indirectly, express the view that images and image-making are reprehensible and that Christians must be uncompromisingly opposed to all forms of visual imagery.

An important change of opinion and change in practice occurred in the early third century. At that time certain Christians took it upon themselves to make visual images. This was the first time in their history that professed Christians departed from the aniconic essence of their religion. The decision to depart from that essence must be attributed to a number of factors, almost all of which have to do with the social history of Christianity in the second and third centuries. The social composition of the church was changing; richer and more established groups, people with power, were converting to Christianity. The church was acquiring land and money through its new constituency. Concomitantly there was a loss of apostolic and aniconic spirituality. Gnostics may have influenced certain Christians in their decision to make visual imagery. Or the introduction of images may have been due to certain so-called "accidental" factors, such as the acquisition of property and the necessity of sealing one's household goods against theft (esp. by one's slaves).

In a word, Christianity was becoming secularized and with secularization came the making and cultivation of images (a lower form of spiritual activity). Again literature corroborates this view. Precisely at the same time that certain Christians were making visual images for the first time in Christian history, other Christians, namely the upholders of essential and normative aniconic Christianity, intensified their attack on visual arts and images and on all forms of image-making. Such authors as Tertullian, Clement, and Hippolytus spoke out vigorously against the evils of visual imagery; their diatribe can be more or less clearly correlated with the image-making and image-cultivating predilections of their fellows. Their diatribe in condemnation of images was pronounced in an effort to stem the tide, if possible, to turn back the tide, of image-making activities which they saw around them; but their diatribe fell mostly on deaf ears. Christians had begun to make images; a decisive change and turning point in Christianity had been reached and there was no going back to the age of pristine aniconism. Thus, the theory of presumptive change.

What is wrong with this theory? It has three major faults. First, it is the victim of essentialism; second, it regards the archaeological argument from silence as binding; and third, it adduces historical causes which are difficult to verify in order to explain the change of attitudes that accompanied the putative beginning of Christian image-making in the early third century.

The use of essentialism in the criticism of the early Christian "Bilderfrage" is an inheritance of Liberal Protestantism. According to this tradition, in its inner core, its essence or "Wesen", Christianity is an aniconic religion, always was and always will be. Essentialism is, in the words of one commentator, the "most durable of secular superstitions"; its application to the early Christian "Bilderfrage" is especially inappropriate.[3]

Early Christianity was not essentially anything, or to put it more positively, it was many peoples, places, ideas, events, and things. Different peoples responded to the kerygma in different ways; most of the responses went unrecorded. Of those that we know about none was more essentially Christian than the next, or more normatively correct. History is supposed to be an inductive discipline which arrives at its limited truths empirically. This requires knowledge of events, times, places, personalities, things, ideas. The historian seeks to discover what he perceives to be meaningful patterns of behavior and thought, patterns which may cut across a larger body of information and characterize it, in his opinion, appropriately. The belief in essences undercuts the historical enterprise by abstracting facts to fit essences.

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[3] D.H. Fischer, Historians' Fallacies, N.Y., 1970, 68.

The essentialist view of early Christianity as an aniconic religion is unsupported in details. The parent religion, Judaism, had its rigoristic rabbis, but they did not speak for all Jews, nor did they represent normative Yahwism, the true and "essential" form of Israel's religion, unless one assents to the idea that there was such an essence in the beginning. Occasional rigoristic voices were heard among Christians during the period under review here; but mostly we do not know what Jesus thought about visual imagery, if he thought about it at all, and we do not know what most of his early following thought about this subject.

Regarding the second point, namely the archaeological argument from silence, it is precisely that, an argument from silence. It means that we do not know if Christians made images prior to the early third century; we do not know if Christian visual imagery existed during this period. I repeat, not knowing that something existed is different from knowing it did not exist. The argument from silence is not enough; other corroborative evidence must be adduced in order to prove that Christianity was in fact an aniconic religion prior to the early third century.

And thirdly, the change of attitude which is supposed to have occurred in the early third century and which is supposed to have been accompanied by the rise of image-making in Christian circles is a change that is explained by certain historical factors. The social and spiritual condition of Christianity is said to have changed at this time; especially important in the development of visual imagery is the putative transformation of Christianity's social condition. The church grew and acquired richer, more powerful people. With this rich and more powerful new constituency came the loss of apostolic spirituality, the domestication of eschatological charisma and fervor; and this loss created the conditions necessary for the rise of Christian art. In other words, image-making is linked up with a loss of the original higher form of spirituality and is made to depend on the secularization of the new religion. But was Christianity secularized in the late second or early third centuries? Was there a widespread loss of eschatological fervor? Did the growth of the church at this time involve the conversion of numbers of rich and highly placed people? And finally, even if all these things did happen, why is image-making made to correspond to a loss of spirituality? Is image-making really a less spiritual activity than, e.g., writing and reading books. It would be natural enough for von Harnack, presiding over one of Germany's most prestigious literary academies, to think so, but is it true? Maybe there was a general loss of spirituality at end of the second and beginning of the third centuries. Maybe eschatological consciousness waned, although the catacomb paintings and early Christian epigraphy are prima facie evidence of an intensely eschatological expectation shared by numerous Christians in the post-apostolic period. Certainly things changed as the church grew; whether that change should be equated with a loss of spirituality is still another question. In general it is not a good idea to link image-making with a loss of spirituality. First there is no hard evidence that such a loss occurred in the late second and early third centuries; this might be argued more persuasively for the transition from the third to the fourth century. And secondly, even if such a loss of spirituality did occur, it is gratuitous to suppose that image-making was one of its manifestations.

It is not impossible that Christians who made images were influenced by Gnostics; but it is impossible to prove this for the period under review here. It is not impossible, and perhaps even probable, that Christians who made images in lower Egypt and who owned property there were influenced to image-making by their special circumstances, which Klauser refers to, inappropriately, as "accidental"; they had to seal their property against theft and to this end they needed seals, they thought, seals bearing images, e.g., Paed. 3/59/2. Once again, the difficulty in testing this theory concerns the almost complete absence of Christian archaeological remains from Egypt prior to the fourth century. Of course it is important to note that all of these putative historical causes are adduced in order to explain a change of attitude and practice which is itself only a theory. It may be equally possible that there never was a substantial change of Christian attitudes and practices in the matter of image-making. Maybe Christians had already made images, or adapted already existing images to their own purposes, prior to the third century.

3. Presumptive continuity?

Wilpert presumed the continuity of early Christian art. To prove his point archaeologically, it was necessary for him to rely on an erroneous chronology, a chronology which enabled him (or so he thought) to date some of the oldest surviving figured monuments of Christianity into the first century. We know today that these monuments do not date to the apostolic period. This is true at least of the figured monuments which are preserved in the West (catacomb paintings and funerary sculpture) and at Dura Europos (baptistery paintings). The chronology of minor objects, lamps, glass vessels, gems and the like is uncertain; we also do not know the chronology of most decorative-symbolic graffiti which accompany early Christian inscriptions (because we do not know the chronology of the inscriptions). In addition, the whole question of the date and the identification of so-called Jewish Christian imagery is open to speculation; if they can be shown somehow to be the product of Jewish Christianity, some of the images in question, which are very early in date, will require a revision of the traditional chronology. But for the present none of the monuments which we candate and which we can identify as Christian can be assigned to the period before ca. A.D. 200. We have seen that this fact is traditionally interpreted to mean that Christianity was an aniconic religion before the third century. Can this data be interpreted in another way?

Let us presume for the moment that there was no radical break or change in Christian attitudes toward visual arts and images from the second to the third centuries. Let us assume, in other words, that Christians made images during the first and second centuries, or if economic and social conditions did not allow for the actual establishment of Christian workshops, let us assume that at least some Christians availed themselves of images that they could obtain in their immediate environs. Thus they would have chosen images like the shepherd-criophoros, images, that is, which could be harmonized with their own beliefs and which were not offensive to their morality and their faith. They would have adapted these images to their own various purposes, much as Clement described the situation in Alexandria at the very beginning of the third century. It is my guess that Christians did precisely this, i.e., adapted already existing symbolic images to their own purposes long before the third century; this is the meaning of proto-Christian imagery. But if they did this, where are these images? Why does none of them survive? Of if they survive why have we been unable to identify any of them?

The problem is a difficult one and we should not expect perfectly convincing solutions. If it ever becomes possible to demonstrate archaeologically that Christians made images before the third century, or adapted already existing images to their own purposes, then it is likely that this will have to be shown in the area of funerary monuments. The latter have a far greater likelihood of survival from the earliest days of Christianity than does any other class of monuments.

There is in fact an a priori continuity of material culture between the third century and the preceding Christian centuries; it consists in the fact that Christians buried their dead from the beginning of the new religion. This is irrefutable and only the most perverse scepticism would attempt to deny this fact. Christians valued the material remains of their dead and, when possible, interred them solemnly. Often the corpses of the Christian dead survived only in small degree due to the mutilation and destruction of human life to which some Christians fell prey in Rome's amphitheatres. Even so, if the magistrate permitted, the survivors gathered together whatever flesh and bones remained of their departed brethren and buried these in the earth.

Christians eschewed cremation. The written evidence for this is abundant and convincing; it has been assembled and commented on elsewhere and need not be rehearsed here.[4] The point which concerns us presently is the matter of Christian burials in the first and second centuries. Where were Christians buried during this period and why are we so poorly informed about this subject? Where are the material remains of these burials, in particular their epitaphs? These are difficult questions, to which there are no positive solutions at present, but they are questions which will have to be answered one day if we expect to advance the understanding of the early Christian "Bilderfrage".[5]

Certain factors must be considered anew. Christians buried their dead prior to the third century, and it would be absurd to argue from the absence of identifiable material funerary remains from this period that they did not, or that they only began to bury their dead in the early third century. It is very likely that in Rome at least, and probably elsewhere, the Christian organization of burial places did not go back much before the late second century. At least this is the period when we first hear about such establishments in the sources.[6] Before that time Christians were probably buried in pagan places, in family and other private burial places, or in the case of slaves, possibly in common _puticuli_. If they were interred in the earth (and we must assume that most Christians could not afford more than this), then their burials must have been sealed, in the case of the humblest, with tiles, and if money were available, with stone, perhaps marble slabs. Did Christians cut or scratch inscriptions into these tiles and stones? We do not know, but it seems probable. Did they make images (no doubt graffiti in most cases) to accompany their inscriptions? Again, we do not know, but unless we assume from the outset that they were rigoristically aniconic, it is at least possible if not probable.

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[4] A.C. Rush, Death and Burial in Christian Antiquity, Wash., D.C., 1941.

[5] A.M. Schneider, "Die ältesten Denkmäler der Römischen Kirche", Festschrift zur Feier des zweihundertjährigen Bestehens der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen II, Phil.-hist. Kl., Göttingen, 1950, 191ff.

The discipline of Christian archaeology is relatively ancient, especially compared with other modern disciplines. Nearly three and one half centuries have passed since Bosio published his Roma sotterranea which initiated the modern study of Christian archaeology. The fact that we do not have the answers to the above-mentioned questions, even at this late date in the study of Christian archaeology, is related to the progress and status of the discipline itself. Three factors in particular need to be singled out and commented on briefly here: 1. excavation techniques; 2. chronology of inscriptions; 3. theory of Christian symbols.

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[6] A.M. Schneider, _op.cit._, 176ff.

Many of the most important early Christian sites have been irrevocably destroyed. What is lost is lost, and in numerous cases it is simply impossible to recover information in sufficient detail to permit an accurate reconstruction of the history associated with a given site. In part, the answer to this problem lies in new excavations, especially in places other than Rome. Many places come to mind, but probably Ostia ranks highest on the list because at Ostia there is good reason to believe that Christian burials survive from the period before the third century and because the zone of Christian burials has been identified (or at least conjectured) by Raïssa Calza.[7] If we are to determine whether Christians scratched or cut symbolic images into their funerary monuments prior to the third century, then excavators will have to turn their attention not (as is their wont) just to the accomplished products of the fourth century and later Byzantine periods but will have to be equally attentive to the humbler products of the pre-Constantinian period. If in the past excavators had paid equal attention to the graves of the poor then we would very likely have the answer to our question today. This was done, for instance, in the recent Vatican excavations, where for obvious reasons, every scrap of evidence was precious; the consequence was that the excavators were able to infer a chronology from burials γ, η, θ, ξ, and ι, burials which at another early Christian site would perhaps have been ignored because of their relative insignificance.[8]

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[7] R. Calza, "Le sculture e la probabile zona cristiana di Ostia e di Porto", PARA, Rendiconti 37, 1964-1965, 155-257.

Secondly, a reliable chronology of Christian inscriptions and graffiti prior to the mid-third century is imperative. Without this it is obviously impossible to determine whether Christians made images to accompany inscriptions; if we had at least the outline of a chronology, then we would have gone a long way toward solving our problem.

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[8] B.M. Apollonj-Ghetti et. al., Esplorazione sotto la confessione di San Pietro in Vaticano I, Città del Vaticano, 1951, 110ff. Cf. J.M.C. Toynbee, J.B. Ward-Perkins, The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations, London, 1956, 135ff.

And thirdly, there is the question of early Christian symbols. Although there are numerous monographs devoted to individual symbols, in truth our cumulative understanding of early Christian symbols is very uncertain. This is evidenced for instance in Klauser's recently expounded theory of the shepherd-*criophoros*, a theory which, if accepted, would throw the study of early Christian archaeology into even further substantive and methodological chaos. The distressing fact is that Klauser's theory has met with so little serious criticism (apart from J. M. C. Toynebee's reviews) from members of the profession.[9] Klauser's theory of symbol applies mutatis mutandis to literature as well as to visual arts. The shepherd metaphor, for instance, has a long pre-Christian history in pagan literature (as well as in Jewish literature). But if Klauser had argued to an audience of Patristics or New Testament scholars that the pagan history of this metaphor was solely determinative in establishing its meaning for early Christian literature, then I dare say Klauser and his theory would have been considered, politely rejected, and dismissed. But this has not happened in Christian archaeology; and this can only be interpreted as evidence that the discipline itself is uncertain of its own critical bases.

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[9] In one instance known to me Klauser's shepherd-*criophoros*/φιλανθρωπία equation is dignified by association with the catalogue of a major collection of early Christian ivories, namely the Dumbarton Oaks collection, catalogued recently by K. Weitzmann; cf. the discussion accompanying accession nos. 63.24 and 45.3. In addition to Professor Toynbee's intelligent and informed criticism of Klauser, opposition to his theory has been expressed by L. de Bruyne, but not with the same degree of intelligent persuasiveness; cf. de Bruyne's brief remarks, *AttiVI.CIAC*, 239-241.

A critical corpus of early Christian symbols is needed. In contrast to Goodenough's monumental _opus_, which was often cavalier in its treatment of chronological matters, a corpus of Christian symbols must pay strict attention to matters of chronology. As I hope I have made clear in my brief discussion of proto-Christian imagery, the critical basis of the distinction between Christian and non-Christian symbol needs to be reconsidered in full. Archaeological fundamentalism must be rejected once and for all. Christianity is now and was in antiquity more than what is contained in Scripture, and early Christian symbols were more than just the illustration of Biblical narration. The place to begin is the shepherd-_criophoros_, the keystone of the entire corpus. To that end a catalogue of immediately relevant Hellenistic and Greco-Roman shepherd-_criophoros_ figures should be drawn up; Klauser omitted this detail and the omission was fundamental.

The shepherd metaphor in pagan literature and poetry and in Jewish literature must be considered as well. As historical sources symbols are elusive and will remain so. But a corpus of proto-Christian symbols, which would consider their relevant context, would at least help us to establish probable levels of interpretation and would help clarify their place in early Christian art.

In summary, there is no final proof at present of the theory of presumptive continuity. There is one strong point in its favor, namely the material continuity which is established a priori by the fact that Christians buried their dead ab origine. The job is now to identify some of these burials or at least the material traces of these burials (of which epigraphic materials are the most important) and thus to determine whether Christians made symbols to accompany their funerary monuments prior to the third century. If they did (which I believe is probable) then we would have archaeological confirmation of the theory that Christianity was not a rigoristically aniconic religion prior to the third century.

4. Tentative correlation of evidence from written sources with evidence from archaeological sources.

Much of the earlier polemic entered into by Protestants and Catholics on the subject of early Christian attitudes toward images centered on a supposed conflict of evidence. Protestants, like their iconoclastic forebears, found a justification for their own iconophobic inclinations in the literature of early Christianity. Koch, for instance, followed a Byzantine precedent; he assembled negative pronouncements vis à vis images which were contained in the literature of the early church and used these excerpts to verify his theory that early Christianity had been normatively and essentially an aniconic religion. Catholics responded to the Protestant challenge by adducing archaeological evidences of the early Christian proclivity to image-making. Catholic authors interpreted the mere existence of early Christian art to mean that early Christians were not iconophobes. Underlying this Protestant-Catholic debate was the assumption that evidence from the one body of sources invalidated evidence from the other body of sources. Literary pronouncements proved that the image-makers were wrong; or image-making proved that rigorists were mere cranks who did not really understand what Christianity was all about.[10]

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[10] For an outspoken presentation of this latter position, cf. A. Knöpfler, "Der angebliche Kunsthass der ersten Christen", Festschrift Georg von Hertling, Munich, 1913, 41-48.

But the assumption, namely that evidences from written sources and evidences from archaeology were mutually invalidating, was false.

We have surveyed the written evidence relative to our subject and have determined that the authors in question addressed their remarks almost exclusively to one class of images, namely images which they judged to be idolatrous. There were occasional evidences of the blanket prohibition of all images, that is rigorism, but these cannot be called representative by any stretch of the imagination.

We have also surveyed the oldest surviving archaeological evidence and have concluded that the kind of images which Christians made were not the kind of images which Christian authors found offensive. Christians made symbolic images (whether proto-Christian images or Biblical images) illustrative in particular of their soteriological convictions and aspirations. Among the images which we have surveyed there is a striking absence of cult images; these did not appear until a later date in Christian history.[11] We must conclude that the Christian authors who concerned themselves in any way with the subject of visual arts and images during the first two centuries of Christianity were simply not addressing their remarks to the kind of visual imagery which survives as the oldest Christian art. If they had been concerned about the visual imagery which appears on the walls of the catacombs or on early Christian sarcophagi then they probably would have said so.

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[11] The development of Christian cult images is discussed in E. Kitzinger, "The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm", DOP 8, 1954, 83ff., and J. Kollwitz, "Zur Frühgeschichte der Bilderverehrung" RQ 48, 1953, 1ff.

AA	Archäologischer Anzeiger
AbhBerl, Phil.-hist. Kl.	Abhandlungen der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse
AbhGött, Phil.-hist. Kl.	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-historische Klasse
AbhHeidelb, Phil.-hist. Kl.	Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse
AbhLeipzig, Phil.-hist. Kl.	Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philologisch-historische Klasse
AbhMainz, Geistes-sozialwiss. Kl.	Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften, Mainz, Geistes- und Socialwissenschaftliche Klasse
AbhMü, Phil.-hist. Abteil. (or Kl.)	Abhandlungen der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Abteilung (or Klasse)
ABR	Australian Biblical Review
AC	Antike und Christentum
AcA	Acta Archaeologica
AIBL	Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres
AIRF	Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae
AIRRS	Acta Instituti Romani Regni Sueciae (Svenska Institutet i Rom)
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology

ArtB	Art Bulletin
AttiIII.CIAC	Atti del III Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana, (Ravenna, Sett. 25-30, 1932), Città del Vaticano, 1934.
AttiIV.CIAC	Atti del IV Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana, (Citta del Vaticano, Ott. 16-22, 1938), Città del Vaticano, 1940.
AttiV.CIAC	Atti del V Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana, (Aix-en-Provence, Sept. 13-19, 1954), Città del Vaticano, 1957.
AttiVI.CIAC	Atti del VI Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana, (Ravenna, Sett. 23-30, 1962), Città del Vaticano, 1965.
AttiVII.CIAC	Atti del VII Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana, (Trier, Sept. 5-11, 1965), Città del Vaticano, 1969.
BAC	Bulletin archéologique du Comité des travaux historiques et archéologiques
BACrist(BullAC)	Bulletino di Archeologia Cristiana
BCAR	Bulletino della Commissione Archeologica Comunale in Roma.
BJ	Bonner Jahrbücher
BKV	Bibliothek der Kirchenväter
BollAC	Bollettino Amici delle Catacombe
BR	Bucknell Review
BZ	Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CA	Cahiers archéologiques
CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly

CivC	La Civiltà Cattolica
CC	Corpus Christianorum
CH	Church History
CIAC	Congresso Internazionale di Archeologia Cristiana
CIL	Corpus Inscriptionorum Latinorum. Berlin.
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CSCO	Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium
DACL	Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne
DAGR	Dictionnaire des Antiquites Grecques et Romaines (C. Daremberg/E. Saglio)
DB	Dictionnaire Biblique
DHGE	Dictionnaire d'Histoire et Géographie Ecclésiastique
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
EAA	Enciclopedia d'Arte Antica
EC	Enciclopedia Cattolica
EJb	Eranos Jahrbuch
FA	Fasti Archaeologici
Final Report VIII/1	The Excavations at Dura Europos, Final Report VIII, Part I, Carl H. Kraeling, The Synagogue, New Haven, 1956.
Final Report VIII/2	The Excavations at Dura Europos, Final Report VIII, Part II, Carl H. Kraeling, The Christian Building, New Haven, 1967.

FS	Frühmittelalterliche Studien
Garrucci	Storia dell-arte Cristiana, Prato 1873-1881
GCS	Griechische Christliche Schriftsteller
GRBS	Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies
HE	Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History
HJ	Historisches Jahrbuch
HS	E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, New Testament Apocrypha, Phil., 1963, 1965 (Eng. trans. R. McL. Wilson)
HTR	Harvard Theological Review
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
HZ	Historische Zeitschrift
ICUR	Inscriptiones Cristianae Urbis Romae
IDB	Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal
ILCV	Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres (E. Diehl)
IWWKT	Internationale Wochenschrift für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Technik
JbAC	Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Münster
JbL	Jahrbuch für Liturgiewissenschaft
JbRGZ	Jahrbuch des Römisch-Germanischen Zentral Museums, Mainz

JdI	Jahrbuch des Königlichen deutschen archäologischen Instituts
JEA	Journal of Egyptian Archaeology
JGS	Journal of Glass Studies
JIVA	Journals Internationales du Verres
JRS	Journal of Roman Studies
JThS	Journal of Theological Studies
JWarb	Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes
MJbK	Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft
MonAnt	Monumenti antichi pubblicati per cura della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei
MPG	Migne, Patrologia Graeca
MPL	Migne, Patrologia Latina
MQR	Mennonite Quarterly Review
NCE	New Catholic Encyclopedia
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NrGött	Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Kl.
NSc	Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità
NTS	New Testament Studies
NTT	Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift
NuovBull	Nuovo Bollettino di Archeologia Cristiana, 1895-1922
NZMW	Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft
OC	Oriens Christianus

ÖJh	Österreichisches Jahresheft
OS	L'Orient Syrien
PARA	Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia, Dissertationi... Rendiconti...Memorie
PhilWoch	Philologische Wochenschrift
PIAC	Pontificio Instituto di Archeologia Christiana
PW	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll, Realenzyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft
RA	Revue archéologique
RB	Revue Biblique
RÉJ	Revue des Études Juives
RGG	Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart
RHE	Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique
RhM	Rheinisches Museum, Frankfurt
RivAC	Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana
RK	P. Styger, *Die Römischen Katakomben*, Berlin, 1933.
RKW	Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft
RlAC	Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum
RM	P. Styger, *Römische Märtyrergrüfte*, Berlin, 1935.
RömMitt	Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung
RQ	Römische Quartalschrift
RS	G.B. de Rossi, *La Roma sotterranea cristiana descritta e illustrata*, Rome, 1864-77.

RSPT	Revue des sciences philosophiques et theologiques
RTAM	Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale
RTR	The Reformed Theological Review
SBBerl	Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse.
StC	Studia Cattolica
TDNT	G. Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1964.
TG	Theologie und Glaube
ThLZ	Theologische Literaturzeitung
TLb	Theologische Literaturblätter
TQ	Theologische Quartalschrift
TRev	Theologische Revue
TRu	Theologische Rundschau
TS	Theological Studies
TStK	Theologische Studien und Kritiken
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
TWNT	G. Kittel, *Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, Stuttgart, 1933 ff.
VC	Vigiliae Christianae
WJbK	Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte
WMK	J. Wilpert, Die Malereien der Katakomben Roms, Freiburg, 1903.
WS	J. Wilpert, *I sarcofagi cristiani antichi*, Roma, 1929-32.

YCS	Yale Classical Studies
ZAAK	Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft
ZATW	Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZDPV	Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins
ZKG	Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte
ZKT	Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie
ZNTW	Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
ZTK	Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

ABBREVIATIONS

Acts	*The Acts of the Apostles*
adv. Haer.	*Adversus Haereses*, Irenaeus
An.	*De anima*, Tertullian
Apol.	*Apologeticum*, Tertullian
Bapt.	*De baptismo*, Tertullian
Carn.	*De carne Christi*, Tertullian
II Clement	Pseudo-Clement, *Epistle to the Corinthians*
Cor.	*De corona*, Tertullian
I, II Cor.	*The Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians*
Cult.	*De cultu feminarum libri II*, Tertullian
Exod.	*Exodus*
Ez.	*Ezekiel*
Gal.	*The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*
HE	*Historia Ecclesiastica*, Eusebius
HS	E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher, *New Testament Apocrypha*
Idol.	*De idololatria*, Tertullian
Iei.	*De ieiunio*, Tertullian
Iud.	*Adversus Iudeos*, Tertullian
Jewish War	*Flavii Josephi Opera VI. De Bello Judaico*
Jn.	*The Gospel according to John*
KKR	R. Knopf, G. Kruger, G. Ruhbach, eds. *Ausgewählte Märtyrerakten*. Tubingen, 1965.

KP	The Kerygma Petrou
Lk.	The Gospel according to Luke
Marc.	Adversus Marcionem, Tertullian
Mk.	The Gospel according to Mark
Mon.	De monogamia, Tertullian
MPG	Migne, Patrologia Graeca
MPL	Migne, Patrologia Latina
Mt.	The Gospel according to Matthew
Nat.	Ad nationes libri II, Tertullian
Or.	De oratione, Tertullian
Oratio	Oratio ad Graecos, Tatian
Paed.	Paedagogus, Clement
Philem.	The Epistle of Paul to Philemon
Prax.	Adversus Praxean, Tertullian
Pud.	De pudicitia, Tertullian
Res.	De resurrectione, Tertullian
Rev.	The Book of Revelation
Rom.	The Epistle of Paul to the Romans
I, II Sam.	I, II Samuel
Shepherd	The Shepherd of Hermas
Spect.	De spectaculis, Tertullian
Strom.	Stromata, Clement
I, II Thess.	The Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians
I, II Tim.	The Epistles of Paul to Timothy

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